LEARNED AND EXCELLENT TREATISE,

CONTAINING ALL THE PRINCIPALL GROUNDS OF CHRISTIAN RELIGION:

SET DOWNE BY WAY OF [illegible], in a most plaine and familiar manner.

WRITTEN FIRST IN FRENCH, BY M. *Mat. Virel*, after translated into Latine, and then into English, for the vse of our Countrymen.

The tenth Impression.

Now newly reuised, and very much amended, according to the best and perfectest copy; *with a Table thereunto annexed.*

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1. TIM. 4. 15.

These things meditate, and labour in them, that thy profiting may be manifest to all.

LONDON,
Printed by IOHN LEGATT, for *Edward Bishop*, and are to be sold in Pauls Church-yard, at the signe of the Brasen Serpent. 1615.

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THE ARGVMENT AND ORDER of the three Bookes of Christian *Religion.*

THE FIRST BOOKE

Declareth the fundamentall poincts of our saluation. And it consisteth of foure Chap.

The first whereof intreateth of the knowledge of God: who, being perfectly iust, and perfectly mercifull, doth not onely shew mercy, but also declare his iustice.

The second, of the knowledge of man: who, being a most miserable sinner, is guiltie of eternall death before the iudgement seate of God.

The third of the knowledge of Christ: who, hauing satisfied the most perfect iustice of God for vs, openeth a way to his most perfect mercy, whereby we may obtaine forgiuenesse of our sins.

The fourth, of Faith: wherby we are made one with Christ, and so partakers of all his benefits, and euen of euerlasting life.

THE SECOND BOOKE

Containeth the testimonies of our saluation: and it consisteth of two Chapters.

The first whereof intreateth of good works: by the which, faith (lying hid in our hearts) is manifested.

The second, of prayer: which, for the testifying and confirming of our faith, hath the first and chiefe place among good works.

THE THIRD BOOKE

Setteth before vs the outward meanes, whereby God bringeth vs to saluation. And it consisteth of foure Chapters.

The first whereof intreateth of the ministery of the Word: by the which the Holy Ghost begetteth faith in our hearts, keepeth it there, and increaseth it.

The second, of the Sacraments, ordained of God to be as seales of the word; to the end wee might with greater assurance embrace the promises reuealed vnto vs, in the word of Christ.

The third, of Baptisme: whereby God testifieth, that we are receiued of him into couenant; forasmuch as hee communicateth Christ vnto vs, together with his benefits.

The fourth, of the Lords Supper: by the which God witnesseth, that his couenant is confirmed in vs, in that he maketh vs more and more partakers of Christ and his gifts.

The summe of all, laid down in a triple or threefolde method: that we may the better know the order and coherence of euery poinct of Christian Religion; as also the truth, excellency, and profit of the same.

T

TO THE CHRISTIAN READER, AN ADMONITION TOVCHING READING.

IT falleth out in matter of learning, as it doth in matter of meates: for, as in meates, one and the selfe same is diuersly set foorth; according to the inuention of the dresser, and appetite of the eater; so, in learning, one and the selfe same point is diuersly handled; according to the discretion of the Writer, and capacitie of the Reader. Hence it commeth, that in humane learning euery Writer (almost) hath his Grammer, his Rhetoricke, his Logicke, his Philosophy; and in diuine knowledge, his Catechisme, his Common places, his Commentaries. Many complaine of this, as a thing which distracteth the minde, confoundeth the memorie, and hindreth the iudgement. And not without cause: For, as varietie of meate do corrupt in the stomacke, and breede sickneſſe, rather then preserue health; so varietie of Treatises, vpon one and the selfe same thing, doth hinder the growth and profiting of diuers in soundneſſe of iudgement, and godly life. But, the reformation hereof is a worke worthie of all the Churches, Princes and States in Christendome: for the beginning and perfecting whereof, priuate men can but pray and wish well; and euery man carefully looke to the warrant of his owne worke. In the meane time, let no man blame the varietie & choice of Gods manifold gifts (which, both in bodily and spiritual things, set forth the riches of his wisdome and goodneſſe): but let vs blame the corruption and vanitie of men; who doe either not at all vse, or else greatly abuse the gifts and blessings of God bestowed vpon them. This vanitie ap-

peareth partly in the foode of the body; but more specially in the
1. Sam. 28. 23. foode of the soule. For no man will refuse his meate, except it bee in some extreame passion. Besides, how carefull are the most part in making their prouision? how curious in asking what is wholsome or hurtfull for them? how precise and constant in keeping their houres for dinner and supper? how willing to keepe themselues to some few kinds of meate? though they haue often tasted and fed on them before. But, touching the food of the soule (which consisteth chiefly in an holy attendance on the publike worship of God, and partly in priuate reading, meditation, and prayer) how many doe refuse it, as a fruitlesse and vnsauorie thing! And though the most part be content, for some carnall respect, to shew themselues in the publike assemblies: yet, who shall finde a faithfull Christian, that is carefull to redeeme the time, and to make himself, by priuate reading and meditation, more fit to reape fruit by the publike ministerie of the Word and Sacraments? But, know thou (beloued) that as they, who through error, preiudice, or selfeloue, are so addicted to their priuate studies, that they dispise, or neglect the publike Ministerie, shall (without speedy mercy of God) fall into diuers fond opinions, and dangerous error, and pine away in their ignorance and sinnes: so, to little purpose is our hearing of Sermons abroad, if there be not a settled and constant course of priuate prayer, reading, meditation and conference at home. But, because my purpose is now to speake onely of reading, and that very briefly (for the argument is infinite, and I haue somewhat touched it elsewhere) I would entreat thee, Christian Reader, and in the Lord Iesus beseech thee (if my request may seeme reasonable) that thou wouldest be as wise for thy soule, as thou art for thy bodie; as mindfull of the life to come, as thou art of this present life; and that, to this end, thou wouldest obserue these foure things, as well for the one as for the other. First, therefore, make thy prouision of good bookes; especially of the booke of all bookes, I meane the holy Canonicall Scriptures, in that respect called the Bible: and then of some others, such as are most fit for thy calling and capacitie. And, because thou shalt want either money to buy, leasure to reade, iudgement to vnderstand, or memory to beare away the substance of all good bookes, prouide the best. Many will say, they finde by experience, that in meate and apparell, the best is best cheape: and thou shalt be sure to find, that, among bookes, the best will yeeld most fruit to thy soule.

Preface to M. Coopers Sermons.

Foure things to be obserued in reading.

1. Prouide the best Bookes.

Secondly,

Secondly, because the most part are babes in iudgement and discerning of spirituall things (though euery foole be wise in his owne eyes) not knowing what is fit and profitable, and what is hurtfull and inconuenient: let me intreat thee to aske counsell and aduice of the godly learned, especially of thine owne Pastour (if God haue blessed thee with an able and faithfull one) or, otherwise, of him whose publike ministery may giue thee hope, that his sences are exercised in the discerning of good and euill. No wise man will receiue a writing for the least plot of ground without the counsell of some learned Lawyer; nor a medicine for his body, without the aduice of some learned Physitian; and wilt thou not aske direction of some godly Diuine, aduenture vpon a booke, containing perhaps some damnable errour (which may conuay from thee thy heauenly inheritance) or some deadly poison, which may kill thy soule? Do it not. Thirdly, remember that nothing is more hard then to be constant in holy exercises. For herein, the subtiltie and rage of our inuisible enemie Satan doth most notably appeare. Herein, the frailtie and corruption of flesh and blood will bewray it selfe: Mere, profit and pleasure, businesse and idlenesse, matters at home and matters abroad, company and a thousand occasions will lie in our way, as so many lions, to let and hinder vs. Therefore herein gird vp the loines of thy minde, put vpon thee the whole Armour of God, and daily renew thy couenant (of redeeming the time) made with God and thine owne conscience. Thou seest, that men who are most greedie of the world, will not misse (scarse once in a yeere) their ordinarie houres of eating and drinking: Why then shouldest thou bee so fickle and vnfaithfull, in forgetting and omitting the times of reading and praying to God? Fourthly, when thou hast begunne a good booke, giue it not ouer, till thou haue ended it: and when thou hast read it once ouer, let it not bee tedious vnto thee to reade it ouer againe and againe. For, thou shalt finde the second reading more fruitfull then the first, and the third more fruitfull then the second: and so the ofter the better. This is a great vanitie and euill sickneſſe among men, that if they haue once seene the title of a booke, and the Authors name, and read two or three leaues therof, it is cast at their heeles euer after, as if they had attained all that could bee learned by it, when they can name the title and Author of it. Wherefore, for this point, marke the course and maner of men, in the keeping and increasing of their bodily strength: Though they eat their fil of this

Heb. 5. 13. 2 In chusing vse the aduice of the godly learned

3 Be constant in keeping of houres.

4 Reade a good booke thorow, and reade it often ouer.

knife of meate to day, yet they come with great desire, and fresh appetite to the same againe within a day or two; yea often times the same day: otherwise it argueth either an extreme weakenesse, or an intolerable dullnesse of the stomacke. Here perhaps thou wilt aske what booke besides the holy Bible, I would commend unto thee. Wherein though I see some difficultie, because it cannot be done without comparisons (which are counted odious) yet for thy good, I will not sticke to shew my poore opinion; which is, That no one Authour (that I have read) hath set downe the summe and grounds of Christian Religion more holily and happily, for the capacitie and edifying of all sorts, then this present Writer. For this cause, I specially recommend him to thee; as one, by whom thou maist exceedingly profit, if thou call upon the name of God through Iesus Christ, and binde thy selfe to diligence and constancie; remembring, that as one dish of meate, well chewed and digested, will comfort nature more then divers delicates, that lie raw and undigested in the stomacke; so one booke often and thoroughly read, will doe thy soule more good, then the superficiall sights and taste of a thousand. And so I commend thee to the Lord: who vouchsafe to give thee wisedome in all things, for his mercies sake. Blacke Friers,

the 23. of July.

Thine in the Lord Iesus,

STEPH. EGERTON.

THE FIRST BOOKE OF CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

WHEREIN THE GROVNDS OF our saluation are handled.

Speakers. THEOPHILVS. MATTHEVV.

CHAP. I.

Of the knowledge of God, who, being perfectly iust, and perfectly mercifull, doth neuer exercise his mercy, but that also he doth exercise his iustice.

THEOPHILVS.

MOst deare brother, I haue often been desirous to heare from your mouth, the whole doctrine of Christian Religion, deliuered in a right and exact course of teaching; because once I heard you intreate, both perspicuously, and briefly, of some maine points thereof, to my great satisfaction.

Mat. If my loue and diligence, in other matters, haue neuer been wanting to you, (most louing *Theophilus*) perswade your selfe, that (at conuenient leisure) I will so much the more chearefully fulfill your desire, because the thing is of it selfe profitable, and such (I hope) as shal be to mine owne edifying. For, this is proper to Christian doctrine, that the oftner it is handled, the more largely it extendeth her force and working in the hearts of the faithfull.

Theoph. Goe to then: can you now bee at leasure to lay forth vnto me, all the chiefe points (or heads) of Christian religion, in order, as I am determined to aske you? and you shall find mee diligent to put them in writing, that so they may be imparted to my brethren.

Mat. Were it so that I wāted leasure, yet, I assure you, there is no busines, but I would lay it aside to satisfie you in this behalf. For, what is there, wherein time can be better spent?

Theoph. Seeing therefore our ſpeech ſhall bee of Chriſtian religion, I deſire to be taught, what is meant by the name Religion.

Mar. Before I anſwer, I beſeech God, our heauenly Father, to be preſent with vs by his holy Spirit, ſo that we may neither thinke nor ſpeak any thing, which ſhall not tend to the honour of his owne name, and to the edification of his whole Church. The name (Religion) is deriued of a word that ſignifieth to bind. And it is a ſpirituall bond: by the which, men in a holy attonement are vnited to God, and held in his loue and feare; that ſo at length they may be partakers of his heauenly glory, and of the bleſſed life. Which no religion can bring to paſſe, but that which is Chriſtian: that is to ſay; that, whoſe foundation is laid in Chriſt.

Theo. Why ſo?

Mar. Becauſe that through Chriſt alone, by faith (not by any merit of ours) we are brought againe into fauour with God (and euen vnited to him, with the cloſeſt bond), that ſo he may be glorified of vs here, and eternally in heauen.

Theoph. From whence haue we proofe of that?

Mar. Out of the word of God, the ſureſt proofe that is: vpon the truth whereof reſteth all Chriſtian doctrine.

Theoph. What vnderſtandeſt thou by the Word of God?

Mar. The Canonicall bookes of the Bible: whereunto for this cauſe, is giuen the name of Holy Scripture.

Theoph. How came it to paſſe, that thoſe bookes were called the Bible?

Mar. The Chriſtians of the Primitiue Church, after they had gathered the bookes of the Prophets and Apoſtles, into one volume, called it (for the excellency thereof) Βίβλια, in Greeke (that is, *Bible*, or *Bookes*) becauſe thoſe books far paſſe all others. For truly the word of God, in worthineſſe and excellency, goeth beyond all the words of men.

Theoph. But, how may it certainely be proued, that the doctrine, which is contained in thoſe books, is the word of God, ſeeing that the Prophets & Apoſtles, who it is certainly knowne were men, were the authors & writers of them?

Mar. Firſt of all indeede it is neceſſarie, that the holy Ghoſt, which ſpake by them, nay whoſe inſtruments onely they were, doe engraue that faith in our hearts. Then, that

aſſurance

assurance may be confirmed, by obseruing the speciall excellencie which is easie to perceiue in those writting, as also the most holy effects which they worke in vs.

Theoph. What excellency doe you meane? 1.

Mar. First of all, the maiesty of the spirit of God, which shineth in them most euidently. For euery where there appeare diuine & heauenly things, nothing earthly & fading, or that agreeth with the corrupt affections of the flesh.

Secondly, the consent of all the parts among themselues. For, although they were penned by diuers writters, 2.
in sundry places, and at sundry times, yet is there no lesse accord, harmony, and consent betweene them, than if they had agreed together of the matter before.

Finally, the fulfilling of all the prophecies, deliuered 3.
long before; yet precisely accomplished each of them in Ier. 25 12. Dan 9 24.
their proper time. Hence it is that Dauid giueth them most Psal. 12. 6.
excellent commendation, saying; The words of the Lord are pure words, as the siluer is tried in a furnace of earth, fined seuen fold, I say nothing of their antiquity; and that not without miracle, they were preserued among so many enemies, which would haue destroied them, and among such cruell persecutions.

Theoph. But what holy effects doe they worke in vs?

Mar. This generally we may marke, that alwaies there was (as to this day, there is) a church, which hath beene gathered together by the authority of the holy scripture: that is to say, a company of men of diuers ages, sexes, and conditions, which worshipped God according to the instruction's and doctrine of that Scripture: a good part of which in all ages haue sealed the same with their blood. But the speciall or particular effects are, that they rauish the reader, and enforce him to the reuerence of God, no otherwise then as if God himselfe did speake.

Also, that, by the reading of them, our hearts are touched with an earnest feeling of our sinnes.

Last of all, that they lift vp our minds about all heauens; kindle within vs a desire of a better life, & cause vs that (in comparison thereof) we doe easily despise all other things.

All which are not done by any writings of men; how they neuer so artificially handled. Therefore the Apostle

to

Heb.4.12. to the Hebrwes ſaith, that the word of God is liuely, mightie in operation, and piercing more then any two-edged ſword, and that it doth reach euen to the diuiding aſunder of the ſoule and ſpirit, of the ioynts and marrow.

Theoph. Verily, theſe are moſt ſtrong arguments, to prooue the truth of Gods word. But, there be ſome which affirme, that all the authoritie and credit of it dependeth vpon the Church.

Mat. They deale herein, as if one ſhould ſay, that the light of the ſun hangeth vpon mans teſtimonie. For, as the ſun ſhall not ceaſe to ſhine, through all men were blinde; ſo, the truth of Gods word is no whit bettered, or impaired, by the applauſe or diſallowance of men. Moreouer, how can it be, that the authority of the word of God ſhould depend vpon the allowance or conſent of the Church? ſeeing that the Church it ſelfe borroweth all her authority of the word, as it were of her foundation. For it is built vpon the foundation of the Apoſtles and Prophets.

Epheſ.2.20.

Theoph. But they ſay, that in this place, it is not meant of the truth of the word in it ſelfe; but of the meane whereby it is apprehended, and receiued of men. Which they affirme to hang vpon the teſtimonie and allowance of the Church. To which purpoſe, they alledge this ſaying of a certaine Father; I ſhould not haue beleeued the Goſpell, if the authoritie of the Church had not mooued me.

Aug. contra epiſt fund. Manich.

Mat. This ſentence maketh not for them. For, this was the minde of that holy man; that, being a ſtranger from the faith, he was mooued by the authoritie of the Church to embrace the Goſpell: and that, after, by the working of the holy Ghoſt, hee was confirmed in that faith. Which hee doth a little before declare, in theſe words; The Church firſt calleth to beleeue that, which yet we are not able to ſee: that ſo, being made ſtronger in faith, we may come to vnderſtand that which we beleeue; God himſelfe, now (not men) inwardly ſtrengthning and enlightning our minde. Which thing I doubt not but it is true: namely, that the witneſſe, which the Church giueth to the word of God, doth not a little moue vs to embrace it. But then onely this is, when our faith is beginning. For when it is come to any age, and that we our ſelues

selues by reading, and hearing of the word, haue tasted of that truth: then wee beleeue not, by the testimonie of the Church, but by that which the holy Ghost sealeth in our hearts. Insomuch, as if the Church should then teach vs a doctrine diuers from that, wee would not giue our consents vnto it. This shall be made plaine by the example of the Samaritans. These, hearing the report of the woman, with whom the Lord had spoken, (namely, that he was the Christ) beleeued. But, after that themselues had heard him, they said vnto the woman: Now wee beleeue not any more, for thy saying. For wee haue heard him our selues, and doe know, that this is indeede the Christ, the Sauiour of the world. Ioh 4.9.42

Theoph. This example bringeth no small light to this doubt. But hitherto sufficiently of the truth and authoritie of the word of God: now let vs in a few words consider, what it doth containe.

Theo. It hath in it at large, whatsoeuer concerneth the glory of God for our good and saluation.

Theoph. By what meanes doth it teach vs to attaine saluation?

Mat. By the true knowledge of God, and of Iesus Christ; the which it teacheth.

Theoph. Let vs therefore first intreate of the knowledge of God: and after, we will speake of Christ, in the propet place. What doe the holy Scriptures teach vs concerning God?

Mat. Three heads or principall things, whereby he is distinguished from all fained gods, besides those which wee do know by naturall instinct giuen vs of God, and by consideration of the creatures, namely, that God is a spirituall essence, eternall, of infinite wisdome, goodnes, and power. Rom.1.10.

Theoph. Rehearse the first of those three.

Mat. That, in one diuine essence, there be three distinct persons, the Father, the Sonne, the holy Ghost. Of the Trinitie.

The Father indeed is the beginning of the Godhead: but that is in respect of the order of the persons. For, in the Godhead it selfe, we may not seeke for first or last.

The Sonne is the wisdome of the Father, begotten of him before the world.

The

The holy Ghoſt is the infinite power proceeding from the Father and the Sonne.

Now theſe three perſons are diſtinct one from the other, not onely by thoſe properties wherein the one of them cannot communicate or partake with the other, but alſo by the difference of their actions. For, the Scripture aſcriberh to the Father, the beginning of working; to the Sonne, wiſdome and counſell; and to the holy Ghoſt, vertue and power. Neuertheleſſe, they bee (to all reſpects) equall in eternitie, dignitie and power: becauſe there is one moſt vndiuided diuine eſſence common to them, and are therefore one God. Howbeit, ſo often as there is mention made of the father together with the ſon, or together with the holy Ghoſt, the name of God is then peculiarly giuen to the father (as to the firſt perſon of the Deity); and yet nothing is diminiſhed of the Godhead of the Sonne, or of the holy Ghoſt: but herein the vnitie of the eſſence is reteined, and reſpect is had to the order of the perſons.

Iob.3.16. Gen.1.2. Hence it is, that the Sonne is called the Sonne of God, and the ſpirit is called the ſpirit of God. But whenſoeuer the name of God is put indefinitely (that is, without an addition of perſons) the Sonne and the ſpirit are no leſſe noted by it, than the Father. As, when the Scripture ſaith; Thou ſhalt worſhip the Lord thy God, and him onely ſhalt thou ſerue. To the King eternall, immortall, inuiſible, to God onely wiſe, be honour and glory for euer and euer.

Mat.4.10. 1 Tim.1.17

Theoph. Verily, this doctrine is beyond all the reach and vnderſtanding of man.

Mat. It is indeed: and yet to be beleeued; as that which God in his word hath reuealed for our ſaluation: which cannot ſtand without it.

Theo. In what place of Scripture is this doctrine taught?

Mat. It may be gathered out of diuers places: but moſt eaſily it is declared by this of *Iohn*; There be three which beare witneſſe in heauen, the Father, the Word, and the holy Spirit: and theſe three are one. When he ſaith three, hee noteth the diſtinction of the perſons: when hee ſaith one, he ſheweth the vnitie of the eſſence.

1.Ioh.5.7.

Theoph. What is the reaſon that the Sonne of God is called Word, and the third perſon, Spirit?

Mat.

Mat. To the Sonne, that name is attributed, by a ſimilitude. For, as ſpeech is the declarer of the minde in men; ſo, by his Word, doth God make himſelfe knowne vnto vs. Concerning the third perſon, that alſo is called the Spirit, by a ſimilitude borrowed from men: that we may vnderſtand it to be, as it were, a breath comming out of the mouth of God: not ſuch as vaniſheth, but which is his power ſpread ouer all things, and yet abideth alwaies in himſelfe. The Prophet doth not obſcurely expreſſe both the ſimilitudes, in theſe words; By the word of the Lord were the heauens made, and by the breath of his mouth all the hoſt of them. Wherein he doth plainely teach; that, the Father, by his eternall wiſedome, which is the Sonne, and by his infinite power, which is the holy Ghoſt, did make all things. Pſalm. 33.6.

Theoph. Hitherto enough of the Trinitie. For, the more deepely the ſharpeneſſe of mans wit ſtriueth to looke into it, the more it is blunted with the greatneſſe of that myſterie. Now, therefore, declare the other head of the knowledge of God.

Mat. It teacheth, that God did not onely in ſix daies by his immeaſurable power make all things; but alſo that they are ſtill preſerued and gouerned by his wiſedome and prouidence, and that his hand is neuer from the worke: ſo that no one of all the things done in heauen or earth, commeth to paſſe by chance, or fortune. For the Scripture witneſſeth: Of Gods prouidence.

That the Lord ſendeth thunders, winds and tempeſts. Pſalm. 29.3.

That he thundreth with his voice, and ſaith to the ſnow, Be vpon the earth. Iob 37.5.6.

That he couereth the heauens with clouds, and prepareth the raine for the earth. Pſalm. 147.8.

That he diuideth the ſea, when the waues thereof doe roare. Iſai. 51.15.

That he giueth meate vnto all fleſh. Pſal. 136.25.

That he maketh peace, and createth euill. Iſai. 45 7.

That hee killeth and maketh aliue: that hee bringeth downe to the graue, and bringeth vp againe. 1. Sam. 2.6.

That he maketh the wound, and bindeth it vp; ſmiteth, and maketh whole. Iob 5.18.

That

Dan.2.21. That he changeth times and seasons, taketh away kings, and setteth vp Kings.

Psalm.33.16. That he ordereth warres, and appointeth the victorie.

Psalm.75.7. That he throweth downe, and lifteth vp.

Prou.16.9. That he directeth the steps of men.

Prou.26.1. That he guideth the answere of the tongue.

Prou 21.1. That he turneth the hearts of men, at his pleasure.

Finally, the prouidence of God leaueth no place for Fortune. For, *Salomon* affirmeth, that euen the whole

Prou.16.33. disposition of the lot is of the Lord. It is plaine therefore, that God ordereth all things, but is not busied or turmoiled with any thing.

Theoph. Now remaineth the third point of the knowledge of God.

Of Gods iustice. *Mat.* That God is perfectly iust, and perfectly mercifull. For, seeing he is of an infinite essence, all his proprieties and vertues be also infinite. For, they be essentiall in

Iames 1.17. him: with whom (saith *Iames*) there is no change or shadow of alteration: That is to say, that, in God, there is nothing subiect to increase, change, or lessening. Whensoeuer therefore he doth exercise his mercie, he doth likewise exercise his iustice; punishing the guiltie and offenders, with deserued punishment. For this cause, when *Moses* had largely in these words commended the mercy of God, *The Lord God mercifull and gracious, slow to anger, and a-*

Exod.34.6.7. *bounding in goodnesse*: straight way after he addeth, *not making the wicked innocent.*

CHAP. II.

Of the knowledge of Man: who, being a most miserable sinner, is before God guiltie of eternall death.

THEOPHILVS.

SEeing God acquiteth not the guilty, it is so far off that by the knowledge of him, man is lifted vp into the hope of saluation, that, cleane contrariwise, he perceiueth his condemnation to be prooued and confirmed; because hee aboundeth with innumerable both infirmities and sinnes, for the which he is found guilty before the most iust iudgement seate of almighty God.

Of mans free-will. *Mat.* Man is not onely, as thou saiest, defiled with many

ny vices and infirmities, but also by his owne nature: First, an enemie of God: Secondly, full of wickednesse. Thirdly, a seruant of sinne, that is to say, such an one as hath neither will nor power to doe well.

Theop. Thou doest indeed very much throw downe man.

Mat. I doe not: but God himselfe, in these words; The wickednesse of man is great in the earth, and all the imaginations of the thoughts of his heart are onely euill continually. Moreouer, in the same Chapter, he teacheth vs, that man is nothing else but flesh. Genes. 6. 5. Verse 3.

And Saint *Paul* plainely affirmeth, that the vnderstanding of the flesh, is enmitie against God: because, saith he, it is not subiect to the Law of God: for indeede it cannot bee. Rom. 8. 7.

The same also hee affirmeth in another place, when hee saith, that we are strangers from God, and enemies, our minde being set vpon euill works: as if he should say, that the enmitie, hid in the heart, was betraied by euill deeds. Col. 1. 21.

In another place also the same Apostle saith, that wee are carnall, solde vnder sinne: that is, that we are the bondslaues of sinne. Rom. 7. 14.

Yea, he proceedeth so farre as to say, that of our selues we are not sufficient to thinke, much lesse able to doe, that which is good. 2. Cor. 3. 5.

Theoph. But, was this the minde of the Apostle, to shew that all generally be bondmen to sinne?

Mat. Yea verily. For, speaking of the naturall corruption of man, out of the testimony of *Dauid*, he saith plainely; We haue prooued before, that both Iewes and Gentiles be vnder sinne; as it is written, There is none iust, no, not one: there is not any which vnderstandeth, or which seeketh after God. They haue all gone out of the way, they haue been made altogether vnprofitable; There is none that doth good, no not one. Rom. 3. 9. Psalme 14. & 53. 2. 3.

The faithfull, indeed, be exempted out of that number: but yet, not because they are not such by nature; but because God (such is his mercy) amendeth our wickednesse and corruption, by the benefit of regeneration, whereby he worketh in vs both the will and power to doe well; as in the proper place, shall be more largely declared. But all the vnbeleeuers, as they be vnprofitable to any good Phil. 2.

worke,

worke, ſo they are carried with great violence vnto euill.

Theoph. But the thing it ſelfe ſeemeth to ſpeake otherwiſe. For, there be (as there euer haue beene) ſome, which haue been endued with moſt excellent gifts.

Mat. 7. 18. *Mat.* The Scripture ſaith, It cannot bee, that an ill tree ſhould bring foorth good fruit. It may indeede ſometimes bring foorth ſuch, as bee goodly to ſee too; which notwithſtanding are nor good. So alſo may wee finde many infidels, which doe works hauing a beautifull ſhew, but ſuch as cannot be good indeede: for the heart, which God ſpecially looketh vnto, is corrupt and vncleane: for it cannot any way be made cleane, but by faith. Therfore the Apoſtle ſaith; Whatſoeuer is not of faith is ſin.

Acts 15. 9. Rom. 4. 23.

Theoph. Wherein ſtandeth that vncleanenеſſe of the heart?

Mat. In that, doing theſe beautifull works, they bee neither touched with the loue nor feare of God; and therefore doe not thinke of yeelding him obedience: neither is it maruell, ſeeing they know him not: Whom, notwithſtanding, no man can loue or feare, before he doe know him.

Theoph. What is it then, that moueth them to do thoſe works which are ſo faire in ſhew?

Mat. Some, becauſe they be not naturally giuen to the vices which they leaue.

Others, becauſe they be reſtrained by a ſlauiſh feare of Gods iuſtice: or elſe for that they dreame to deſerue ſomthing at the hands of God.

Others, for feare of Lawes: or leſt they ſhould doe any thing, that might hinder their proſperitie.

Or elſe their luſts doe ſtriue as the windes, ſo that the ſtronger preuaileth ouer the reſt, and bridleth them from breaking foorth into action. As for example; A vaineglorious man will make a ſhew to be liberall; to the ende, hee may ſerue the turne of his ambition. On the other ſide, a couetous man, that he may ſpare charges, will ſet light by honor; although his minde within be ſet on fire with ambition. A proud man will bee bountifull, to get praiſe among the common people. She that feareth the reproch of the people, although her minde be defiled with vnchaſt luſts, yet outwardly will be chaſte. Finally, the vnfaithfull

faithfull neuer reſpect the glory of God, when they thinke to doe good works. Which, neuertheleſſe, is as it were, the very life of good works: ſo as if it be wanting, they cannot be acceptable to God.

Theoph. If therefore all the goodly deeds, which the vnfaithfull doe, be of no account with God, he ſhall be in no better caſe, which carrieth himſelfe modeſtly, and keepeth vnder the luſts of the fleſh, then he which paſſeth away all his life diſſolutely.

Mat. No verily, not ſo. For God rewardeth thoſe works, yet onely in this life. And oftentimes alſo he giueth them ſuch things, in reſpect whereof, they did their good deeds: as health, quiet life, praiſe, good report among men, and ſuch like. Therefore our Sauiour Chriſt ſaith, that the Scribes and Phariſies, in that they praied and faſted to bee praiſed of men, had their reward. Matth. 6. 16.

Moreouer, the ſtate of ſuch, as in this life haue behaued themſelues modeſtly, ſhall bee eaſier in the day of iudgement, then of the other. Matth. 11. 22.

Theo. How can it be, that God will reward works which he liketh not? being ſuch, as were not done for his ſake?

Mat. Thereby he declareth, how pleaſing a thing true obedience is to him, ſeeing he rewardeth the very ſhadow of it. Adde this hereunto, that he hath regard vnto thoſe works, not as they come from vncleane perſons, but from himſelfe.

Theoph. In what ſenſe ſaieſt thou that thoſe works come from God?

Mat. I ſay that God, to the end that order and euen diſpoſing of things may be kept in the world, doth bridle the wickedneſſe of ſome, and ſo maketh them fit to follow vertue. In which reſpect, we feare not (in common ſpeech) to ſay, that ſuch men are of a good nature: whereby wee meane that euen from the beginning of their life, God gaue them ſome ſpeciall grace. Without which grace, there is no doubt, but that all men be ſuch as they are liuely pictured out by the Apoſtle. For after he hath ſaid, that there is not one wich doth good: ſtraight way he addeth; their throat is an open ſepulcher: they haue vſed their tongues to deceit: the poiſon of Aſpes is vnder their lips: Rom. 3. 12. Pſalm. 5. 10.

Psalm.10.7. Isaiah 59.7. Psalm 35.2. Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitternes: Their feete are swift to shed blood. Destruction and calamitie are in their waies: And the way of peace they haue not knowne: The feare of God is not before their eies. Which testimonies are gathered by him, out of sundrie places of the old Testament, that he might procure himselfe the more authoritie and credit, touching this matter.

Theoph. But how could it be, that man, the most excellent creature of all other, should be so much corrupted?

Genes.1.27. Genes.3.6. *Mat.* It was not by his first nature (for hee was made after the Image of God, that is, like vnto him); but, by originall sin: wherewith *Adam*, by his disobedience in eating the forbidden fruit, infected himselfe and all mankind.

Theoph. Tell me what the Image of God is; wherein thou saist the first man was created: as also that originall sinne, wherewith mankind was afterward tainted?

Of the Image of God. *Mat.* The Image of God consisted in this, that the vnderstanding of man was enlightned with the true knowledge of God, and of the worship due vnto him; and that he was indued with an vpright and good will, disposed to the obedience of God. Now, it is called the Image of God, because in those excellent gifts, man did resemble the wisedome, goodnesse, and power of his Creator. But when *Adam*, by rebellion, fell from this his estate, hee was depriued of this Image, and withall did put on the image of the diuell. That is to say, he was spoiled of those notable gifts, in stead whereof, came in all manner of vices. As,

1 The ignorance of God, and of his seruice.
2 Wickednesse: for he hated vertue, and loued sin.
3 Impotency, or lacke of power to all goodnesse.

Of originall sinne. And this is that blot of originall sinne: which, being in vs like a fire of wickednesse and lust, doth continually breath or send foorth the fruits and effects of it; to wit, vngodlinesse, and vnrighteousnesse.

Theoph. But that corruption, it seemeth, should be accounted rather a punishment of *Adams* sinne, then sin it selfe?

Mat. It is doubtlesse, both a punishment of sinne, and the fountaine and welspring of all sins: Neuertheless, it is also sinne, and worthy of death, as *Paul* saith; As by one man sin came into the world, and death, by sin: so also death

Rom.5.12.

went

went ouer all men, through him, in whom we haue all sinned; that is to say, are infected with originall sinne.

Theoph. But how could *Adam* make al his posterity partakers of that infection of sinne?

Mat. By generation. For he could not beget any children, but such as were like himselfe: euen as a viper bringeth foorth none but vipers.

Now it is called originall sinne, that it may appeare wee are corrupted, not by any wickednes taken to vs: but that we do bring with vs an inbred corruption from our mothers wombe. Which very thing *Dauid* confesseth of himselfe: Behold I was borne in iniquity, and in sinne hath my mother conceiued me. Psalm.51.5.

CHAP. III.

Of the knowledge of Christ: who, hauing satisfied for vs the perfect righteousnes of God, hath opened vs a way to his infinite mercy, whereby at length we may come to eternall life.

THEOPHILVS.

LEt vs repeate the order of our former speech. Forasmuch as God in no sort can cease to be iust, nor shew any mercy, but that which may stand with his iustice; and that man is so corrupt, as hath beene prooued by thee out of the Scripture, he can looke for nothing else, but the wrath of God and eternall death.

Mat. God himselfe hath giuen the sentence. For he saith by the Prophets; Cursed be euery one, that continueth not in all things written in the booke of the law, to doe them. Deut.27.26.

And againe; The soule that sinneth, that same shall die. Ezech.18.4. Which things are to be vnderstood, as well of the eternall death, as of the naturall; as is declared by the Apostle *Iohn.* Reuel.21.8. But in Christ, there is remedie offered vs. Therefore the knowledge of him is in the holy scriptures ioined with the knowledge, thereby to attaine eternall saluation. Iohn 17.3.

Theoph. Let vs therefore speake of the knowledge of Christ. And first of all, declare thou those things which concerne his person: and then we shall see what remedie is brought vs by him, to attaine saluation.

Mat. Concerning the person of Iesus Christ, he is the eternall Sonne of God, which tooke vpon him the nature Of the person of Christ.

of man, that is to say, was made man in soule and bodie, like to vs in all things, sinne onely excepted. Therefore the nature of God and man are so ioyned together in him, that they make but one person. Hee hath also but one Father, and one Mother: a Father, in respect of his Godhead, and a Mother, in respect of his Manhood, namely, the Virgine *Marie*, of whose substance hee was conceiued by the power of the holy Ghost.

Theoph. Proove all these things briefly, out of the Word of God.

Gal. 4. 4. *Mat.* Saint *Paul*, speaking of Christ, saith, When the fulnesse of time was come, God sent his Sonne made of a woman. When he saith, that *God sent his Sonne*, hee declareth, that Christ is the second person of the Trinitie, and therefore God: which also elsewhere hee confirmeth in these words; Rom. 9. 5. *Who is God ouer all, Blessed for euer.* But when he addeth, *made of a woman*, he somewhat plainely notifieth him to be very man. Which also he affirmeth elsewhere in these 1. Tim. 2. 5. words; There is one God, and one Mediatour of God and man, the Man Christ Iesus. From the which places, wee conclude, that Christ is very God and Man. For although each nature hath it owne propertie remaining distinct to it selfe; yet to the end we may vnderstand, that in Christ they be ioyned together by a most neere bond, so as they make but one person, the Scriptures oftentimes say that of the diuinitie, which agreeth to the humanitie. As when it is said, Acts 20. 28. that God hath purchased his Church, with his owne blood: and contrariwise, those things are said of the humanitie, which appertaine to the Diuinitie: whereunto that saying of Christ is to be referred; Iohn 3. 13. No man ascendeth vp into heauen, but he which came downe from heauen, euen the Son of man which is in heauen.

Theoph. Declare a little more plainely, what thou meanest by this, when thou saidst, that each nature hath his property remaining distinct to it selfe.

Mat. The Diuinitie was not changed into the humanity: for it remaineth eternall, infinite, and impassible. Againe, the humanity was not turned into the Godhead. For, before the death & resurrection of Christ, it was passible; such a nature as might suffer. And before, as also after death, it

was

was created and finite; which at one time could not bee in diuers places: for this is contrarie to the nature of a true bodie.

Theo. This doctrine, againe, is beyond the reach of man.

Mat. It is indeede: as also *Paul* himselfe confirmeth in these words; Without controuersie, great is the mysterie of godlinesse, God manifested in the flesh. 1. Tim. 3. 16.

Theoph. Hitherto we haue heard sufficiently of the person of Christ; now let vs speake of the remedy brought by him, to our saluation.

Of the remedie brought by Christ to our saluation.

Mat. He hath fully satisfied the iudgement of God for our sins, and thereby redeemed vs from euerlasting death, and withall made vs capable of the heauenly life: if so bee that we be partakers of his gifts.

Theoph. There come three things to my minde, whereof I will aske thee.

1 How Christ hath satisfied the iudgement of God for our sinnes.

2 How he maketh vs partakers of the heauenly life.

3 And why it is necessarie that his gifts should be made ours. Now answer to the first.

Mat. To the ende this may the more easily bee vnderstood, we must remember that whereof wee spake before; namely, that God hath pronounced a curse against all such as transgresse his law, and that we in two respects haue broken it: to wit, by leauing vndone the good which hee requireth, and by doing the euil which he forbiddeth. Now Christ hath prouided a remedy for both: For while he was in this earth, he did fully and perfectly fulfill the Law for vs. Moreouer, he suffered the most shamefull death of the Crosse, that hee might endure the full punishment due to our sins. By which meanes, hauing abundantly satisfied the perfect iustice of God for vs, hee maketh a way to his mercy, whereby we may obtaine forgiuenesse of sinnes. And in this sense it is said: That we were redeemed by the pretious bloud of Christ; that Christ vpon the tree did beare our sins in his bodie; That the blood of Christ doth cleanse vs from all sinne. 1. Pet. 1. 19. 1. Pet. 2. 24. 1. Iohn 1. 17.

Theoph. I cannot wonder enough at the exceeding great loue of God towards vs, in that hee gaue his most

dearely beloued Sonne to the death, for our redemption.

Mat. Adde this, Which were his enemies: which also is diligently obserued in the Apostle in these words; Doubtlesse one will scarcely die for a righteous man: but for one that is profitable to him, peraduenture some man will die. But God commendeth his loue towards vs, in that when we were yet sinners, Christ died for vs. From whence hee draweth this most comfortable conclusion; If, when wee were enemies, we were reconciled to God, by the death of his Sonne: much more, being reconciled, shall we be saued by his life.

Rom. 3. 7.

Rom. 5. 10.

Theoph. But could the iudgement of God be no otherwise satisfied for our sinnes, except his beloued Sonne had taken vpon him our nature, therein to suffer death, the death (I say) of the crosse?

Mat. No. For man, which hath offended the infinite Maiestie of God, doth deserue infinite punishment, that is to say, eternall death: which could not be suffered and ouercome of any, but of the eternall and infinite Sonne of God. Moreouer, the iustice of God required this, that the same nature which had sinned, should suffer the punishment of sin. But because God could not suffer, and man could not ouercome death, it was necessarie that the Redeemer should be very God, and very man, to do both. Wherin also it is to be marked, how neere an attonement God hath entred into with vs, by Christ; in whom the parties at variance be so inseparably ioined together. Wherby it is come to passe, that God hath turned the fall of man to his great good: for thereupon he hath taken occasion to vnite vs more neerely with himselfe. Wherefore, where sinne was increased, there grace hath abounded much more through Christ.

Rom. 5. 20.

Theoph. Hitherto we haue heard sufficiently of the first point; namely, how Christ hath satisfied the iudgement of God for our sinnes: now let vs come to the other, which is, by what right wee may claime to our selues euerlasting life.

Mat. By a double right, through Christ. First, because for vs he hath fulfilled the whole Law: and God hath promised life to such as fulfill it. Secondly, by the right of inheritance. For, after that Christ is made ours, wee are not

Leuit. 18. 5.

onely

onely made partakers of his ſpirituall riches (namely his perfect righteouſneſſe and obedience, whereby we are accounted iuſt before God) but alſo of his dignity, to wit, in that with him we are reputed and taken for the children of God.

Therefore *Paul* ſaith, If we be ſonnes, we are alſo heires, euen heires of God, and heires together with Chriſt. And againe, in another place, he calleth eternall life the lot or inheritance of the Saints: and thus we ſee that in Chriſt be compriſed both the rights, by which we lay claime to eternall life for our ſelues. Rom. 8. 17. Coloſ. 1. 12.

Theoph. Therefore, in Chriſt alone, wee finde all things neceſſary to ſaluation?

Mat. Yea verily. For, in him there is righteouſneſſe, and the fulneſſe of life: & without him, man (full of ſin) findeth nothing but euerlaſting malediction and curſe. Therefore *Peter* ſaith, that, neither is ſaluation in any other; and that there is no other name vnder heauen giuen among men, whereby we may be ſaued. For this cauſe alſo, the name *Ieſus* was giuen him from heauen: by the which, his office is plainely ſet foorth: that is to ſay, all that which he hath performed for our ſaluation, and doth ſtil performe. Act. 4. 14.

Theoph. Go to therefore, tell mee what the name *Ieſus Chriſt* ſignifieth, as alſo of whom it was giuen him. What the name Ieſus ſignifieth. Mat. 1. 21.

Mat. The name *Ieſus* ſignifieth *Sauiour*: and an Angell gaue it to the Sonne of God: becauſe (as hee himſelfe expounded it) hee ſhould ſaue his people from their ſinnes. Concerning the name *Chriſt*, it is to be vnderſtood, that in times paſt, in the old Teſtament, Chriſt was figured or ſhadowed in the Kings, Prophets, and Prieſts, who when they were conſecrated, were annointed with oyle, which ſignified the gifts of the holy Ghoſt. Now the Redeemer promiſed, was in Hebrew, called Meſſias: but in Greeke it is tranſlated by the word *Chriſt*, which in Latin ſignifieth *Annointed*. By which name, we are taught, that hee is the chiefe, Of the name Chriſt. Dan. 9. 25

1. King,
2. Prophet, Luke. 1. 33.
3. Prieſt. Deut. 18. Pſal. 110. 4.

Now, he was annointed not with common viſible oile,

but with the grace of the holy Ghost, and that most fully, that from him, as from the head, it might bee poured into each member, namely into all the faithfull; insomuch as they also together with him are made Kings, Prophets, and Priests. Now, the name *Christ* (being a Greeke word) hath beene retained in all tongues, because the Apostles themselues wrote in Greeke This therefore is the cause, why the name *Christ* was giuen vnto him, as also why all the faithfull are called Christians; euen because they bee partakers of his annointing, and therfore of his kingdom, prophecie, and priesthood.

Reu.1.6.

Of the offices of Christ.

Theoph. First therefore we must see, how Christ performed the offices of King, Prophet, and Priest: and afterward how he communicateth the same with the faithfull?

1. Of King.

Mat. He executed the office of a King, when, by his diuine power, he diliuered vs from the Tyranny of our enemies, the diuell, sinne, and death; whom he ouercome, that he might take from them (into his owne hands) the right & interest, which they had in vs, & so subiect vs to his kingdome: which indeed hee doth continually exercise in vs, while himselfe ruleth vs by the scepter of his word, & the power of his spirit. He executed the office of a Prophet, in that he declared all the will of God, vnto vs, by his worde: he gaue vs also the holy Ghost, by whose helpe it might both be vnderstood of vs, and wee yeeld our consents vnto it. This office also he exerciseth euery day, while, by the ministry of the word, and working of the spirit, he causeth vs daily to profit and go forward in that knowledge.

2. Of Prophet

3. Of Priest.

Finally, he executed the office of a Priest, when vpon the crosse he offred his body & blood for vs to God the father, that he might be a satisfaction for our sins. The execution of which office hath place also at this day, in that he maketh intercession for vs. Now, this Priesthood of Chtist is the truth & fulfilling of all the sacrifices of the old Testament.

Theoph. Let vs now speake of our kingdome, priesthood, and prophetship.

Reu.1.6.

Mat. We are spiritually kings in Christ, that we may ouercome the diuell and sinne.

1.Pet.2.9.

We are Priests; through him to offer vp an acceptable sacrifice of praise to God.

Wee

We are Prophets; that, being taught the truth, wee may reach others, and open to them the mysteries of the kingdome of Heauen. Act. 2.17.

Theoph. It hath beene sufficiently declared, how Christ hath deliuered vs from condemnation, as also by what meanes hee hath made vs fit to attaine eternall life. Now the third point remaineth; namely, why it is necessary, that his gifts should be made ours.

Mar. Because, otherwise, they shall no way helpe vs to the satisfying of the perfect iustice of God: euen as other mens riches auaile nothing to deliuer vs out of debt, except they become ours.

Theoph. How therefore may his gifts become ours?

Mar. If we be made one with him. For, by the benefit of that vnion, wee are made partakers of all his spirituall graces, and riches; which are no lesse imputed vnto vs before God, than if they were ours by nature. For this cause the Apostle saith, that we are, by Christ, reconciled in that body of his flesh, through death By which words of his, he meaneth, that the merit of Christs death pertaineth not to any, but vnto such as be grafted into his body, and are made his members. Of our vnion with Christ. Col.1.22.

Theoph. Can no man therefore bee partaker of Christs gifts, except he be made one with him?

Mar. He cannot: Euen as a woman cannot bee partaker of the riches and honor of some great man, except shee be ioyned with him in marriage, so that they become one body and one flesh: the members also cannot draw life from the head, if they be not ioyned with it. Therefore, there is no true partaking of Christ, except there be an vnion with him. For this cause, therefore, Christ said to the Capernaits; Vnlesse ye eate the flesh of the Sonne of man and drinke his bloud, yee shall haue no life in you. In which words he plainely sheweth, that wee are not partakers of his gifts vnto saluation, except wee be neerely coupled with his humanity, as meat and drinke are ioyned with our body; which of all others is a most neere vnion. For, meate and drinke, when they are digested in our stomacks are so turned into our substance, that they cannot be distinguished or discerned (much lesse separated) from it: Ioh.6.53.

Theoph.

Theoph. This doctrine also is aboue the capacity of man.

Ephes. 5.32. *Mat.* It is indeed. Wherefore *Paul*, speaking of it, saith, that it is a great mystery. Now if wee can neuer so little behold the body of the sunne, but our eies will dazel: how can our minds pearce to that inaccessible light of the diuine maiesty, to conceiue his heauenly mysteries? such as be the points which we haue handled,

1 Concerning the Trinity,

2 Of the vnion of the two natures in Christ,

3 And of coupling the faithfull, with the humane nature of Christ.

It is therefore our duety, rather holily to beleeue these three fundamentall points, or beginnings of Christian Religion, than curiously to examine them by the rule of our Reason.

CHAP. IIII.

Of Faith by the which, we are made one with Christ, and so be partakers of all his gifts.

THEOPHILVS,

HItherto I haue heard, First, that God, who is perfectly iust, doth no way absolue the guilty. Secondly, that men, which are most miserable sinners, are, before the iustice of God, guilty of eternall death. Thirdly that Iesus Christ, by his death, hath satisfied the exact righteousnesse of God: the which his death is imputed to vs; that so being discharged and freed from condemnation, we may be partakers of euerlasting life: if so be that wee bee vnited with him. It remaineth therefore that I vnderstand, how we are vnited (or made one) with Christ?

Mat. By faith: as hee himselfe testifieth in the praier which he made to God for all the faithfull, in these words; Father, I pray thee for such as shall beleeue in me, that they

Ioh. 17.20. al may be one, as thou (O Father) art in mee, and I in thee, that they also may be one in vs.

Wherunto also that saying of *Paul* is to be referred, that

Ephes. 3.17. Christ dwelleth in our hearts by faith. And hereupon it is,

Act 13.39. that these sentences be often repeated in the Scriptures,

1 That euery one which beleeueth in him, is absolued and discharged,

2 Is

2 Is made the childe of God. Iohn 1.12.
3 Doth not perish, but hath euerlasting life. Iohn 3.16.

In which places, those things bee attributed to faith, which we receiue of Christ alone; to the ende we may vnderstand, that both he and his gifts are communicated to vs by faith.

Theoph. Thou hast touched a little concerning the righteousnesse of faith: which I desire to haue declared by thee, somewhat more at large. For I perceiue that *Paul* oftentimes speaketh of it. Of iustification.

Mat. To be iustified before God, is to bee accounted iust, that is to say, without blot, and vnreproueable. Now *Paul* doth often handle this point: because it is one of the speciall grounds of our faith. For no man can please God, but he that is iustified.

Theoph. Why so?

Mat. Because that as God is perfectly iust and holy, so he loueth holinesse and iustice: but, contrariwise, hee hateth vnrighteousnesse. And therefore we can haue no fellowship with him, to be partakers of his heauenly glory, except we be perfectly righteous. Therefore he saith, that no vncleane thing shall enter into the holy Citie. Reuel.21.27.

Theoph. How then are wee iustified, or made righteous before God?

Mat. In the Scriptures, there be two kinds of righteousnesse set foorth to vs: which also do very much differ the one from the other. These are,

1 The righteousnesse of the Law, and
2 The righteousnesse of faith.

But the holy Scriptures do teach vs, that we cannot bee iustified by the former, which is of the Law: to the end we might flie to the other, which is of faith.

Theoph. Declare vnto me, wherein both these kinds of righteousnesse doe stand, as also what is the difference betweene them.

Mat. The righteousnesse of the Law, is the perfect fulfilling of the Law. For if wee did fully and perfectly fulfill whatsoeuer that commandeth, wee should by our works be iust before God; neither should wee neede any other righteousnesse. But, the Apostle in diuers places

sheweth,

ſheweth, that this cannot be; foraſmuch as all men bee
Rom.3.20. Gal.3.11. ſinners, and therefore vnrighteous (which ſhall not be omitted by vs, when we ſpeake of works:) and therefore hee concludeth, that we are iuſtified by faith.

But the righteouſneſſe of faith is the righteouſneſſe of Ieſus Chriſt; which, by faith is freely imputed vnto vs of God. By theſe things thou maiſt vnderſtand, what the difference is betwixt the righteouſneſſe of the Law, and the righteouſneſſe of faith.

1 The Law requireth it of our ſelues: but faith calleth vs from our ſelues, to ſeeke for it in Chriſt: in whom only it is, and that indeed perfectly.

2 Againe, the Law requireth vs to obſerue and do all that it commandeth: otherwiſe it threatneth the curſe. But faith requireth this one thing, namely, that we beleeue; and promiſeth all kind of bleſſings to ſuch as beleeue.

3 Finally, the righteouſnes of the Law, comming from our ſelues, would ſet vp merit, and put away grace: Contrariwiſe, the righteouſneſſe of Faith, which is from God, taketh away merit, and ſetteth vp grace.

Theoph. Now I vnderſtand, wherein both theſe righteouſneſſes conſiſt, and in what things the one differeth from the other. But I thinke it may be gathered of your words, that we are not properly iuſtified by faith, but by the merit of Chriſt.

Met. Thou gatherest rightly. For, if faith ſhould iuſtifie by any inward vertue it hath, ſeeing that our faith is alwaies weake and imperfect, our righteouſneſſe would bee imperfect. Faith therefore is as it were an inſtrument wherwith we take hold vpon our perfect righteouſneſſe, which is in Chriſt, which *Paul* plainely expreſſeth in theſe words; Al
Rom.3.23. 24.25. haue ſinned, and are depriued of the glory of God: but are iuſtified freely, that is to ſay, by his grace, by the redemption made in Ieſus Chriſt; whom God hath ſet forth to bee a reconciliation, through faith in his blood.

Firſt, the Apoſtle witneſſeth, that all men be vnrighteous; foraſmuch as all men haue ſinned, and therefore bee depriued of the fauour of God.

2 Then he teacheth vs, that the righteouſneſſe, by the which we are iuſtified before God, hath the foundation in the

the onely merit of Christs death, wherewith God is pacified; so as he becommeth mercifull and fauourable vnto vs.

3 To conclude, he sheweth, that, freely by faith wee are made partakers of that righteousnesse of Christ. How often soeuer therefore this manner of speech is vsed by the Apostle, *we are iustified by faith*, he vnderstandeth, that this is done by the most perfect righteousnesse, obedience, and satisfaction of Iesus Christ: which gifts are then imputed to vs, when we are by faith made one with him.

Theoph. It followeth then, that all our righteousnesse is onely in imputation?

Mat. Yea truely. For it is necessary, to the end we may be accounted righteous before God, that our vnrighteousnesse be not imputed vnto vs, and that Christs righteousnesse be imputed. Now, Christ performeth all these. The imputation of whose gifts, causeth that our sinnes bee not laide to our charge, forasmuch as by the benefit of that imputation they be couered, and remooued out of the sight of God; although he know euery one of them, so as he can tell their very number. Concerning these things, therefore, the case standeth as it doth with the blacknes of a coale, set on fire: which blackneſse we know to be in the coale, although wee see it not with our eies.

Theoph. These things call to my remembrance that excellent saying of *Dauid*, Blessed are they whose iniquities be forgiuen, and whose sinnes bee couered. Blessed is the man, to whom the Lord imputeth not sinne: but seeing our righteousnesse and all our saluation dependeth vpon faith, tell me what faith is. Psalm. 32.1.

Mat. Faith in Christ is a certaine speciall assurance, by the which we know that we are made partakers of the merit of the death and resurrection of Christ; so, as that it becommeth satisfaction for vs, and forgiuenesse of all our sinnes: * which indeed is the foundation of the Christian faith. Whereupon it is, that they be indifferently vsed. For sometime the Scripture saith, that we are iustified by faith in Christ, and sometime it ascribeth it simply to faith. Gal. 2. 16. Iob 6. 47. * See pag. 24. Rom. 3. 25. 26. Ephes. 2 8.

Theoph. What then is faith?

Mat. The word Faith hath many significations. For sometimes it is as much, as a promise to performe somewhat Of Faith.

what: thereupon, to keepe faith, is the ſame with ſtanding
1 to a mans promiſe. Hereunto may be refetred the ſaying
of *Paul*, God is faithfull; as if he had ſaid, that God (which
2 men doe often) neuer faileth of his promiſe. Sometimes
alſo it is taken for the gift to worke myracles: as, when
1.Cor.13.3. *Paul* ſaith, that if he had all faith, ſo as hee could remooue
mountaines, yet if he had not loue, he were nothing. Be-
3 ſides, it ſignifieth the holeſome doctrine of godlines. As,
Tit.1.13. when *Paul* chargeth *Titus*; Rebuke them that they may be
ſound in the faith. In which ſence, he is commonly ſaid, to
4 be in a wrong faith, which erreth from the purity of do-
Gal.2.16. Epheſ.2.8. Hebr.11.6. ctrine. But, the moſt proper ſignification of the word *faith*,
is that whereof we ſpeake in this place, and whereof there
is ſo often mention in the Scriptures, when in many places
we are ſaid to be iuſtified and ſaued by faith; and, that with-
out faith no man can pleaſe God. To conclude then, faith
is to vs a Certificate, that we are beloued of God.

* See page 23.*. *Theoph.* *But why ſaidſt thou, at the beginning, that faith in Chriſt is the foundation of faith it ſelfe?

Mat. Becauſe wee cannot certainely determine, that God will be mercifull to vs, except we doe firſt know that Chriſt by his death hath made ſatiſfaction to God for our ſinnes, and reconciled him vnto vs. Therefore *Peter* ſaith, that through Chriſt we beleeue in God, which raiſed him
1.Pet.1.21. from the dead, and gaue him glory; that our faith and hope might be in God. From whence it is eaſie to gather, that Chriſt is the onely foundation of our faith, which the holy Ghoſt hath ingrauen in our hearts.

And this is, as it were, the ſumme of the Chriſtian faith, which commonly is called the Apoſtles Creed, *I beleeue in God the Father almighty, &c.*

The expoſition of the Apoſtles Creed.

Theoph. Let vs therefore ſpeake of this confeſſion of the faith: which I deſire thee to expound to me full and whole. But before I come to the parts of it, I will propound three things, wherein I deſire to be ſatiſfied of thee.

1. Firſt, why it is called the Apoſtles Creed.

2. Secondly, ſeeing the doctrine, which is contained in it, generally belongeth to all the faithfull, why

wee

we ſay; I beleeue in God, not, We beleeue in God?

3. Thirdly, what properly it is to beleeue in God?

Mat. The word (*Symbolum*) which in Engliſh ſometime we tranſlate *Creede*, in this place ſignifieth as it were, the gathering together of many parts into one. Which tearme doth not vnfitly agree to this confeſſion of the faith, which we ſee, is made of many articles.

Now, it is called the Apoſtles Creede, becauſe it containeth as it were, a briefe ſumme of all the Apoſtolical doctrine, written in the books of the old and new Teſtament.

Theoph. Let vs come to the other point, whereof I doubted. Why do we ſay rather, I beleeue in God, then We beleeue? ſeeing this doctrine is generall, and all Chriſtians are bound to beleeue it?

Mat. That is for two cauſes. 1. Firſt, becauſe euery man can giue teſtimony of his owne faith; but of another mans faith he cannot.

2. Secondly, that we might vnderſtand, that theſe articles were not written ſo much to teach vs, as that by them wee might be built vp to ſaluation. For, otherwiſe, they ſhould profit vs no more, then if a ſicke man ſaw a medicine, haning vertue to driue away a malady, the working whereof he knew: and yet did neglect to take it.

But, we profeſſe that applying of it to our ſelues, when euery of vs ſaith, I beleeue?

Theoph. As far as I perceiue, there is no little likeneſſe betweene the ſickneſſe of the body, and the ſickneſſe of the minde: and againe, betweene the meanes of attaining the health of the one, and of the other.

Mat. Nay rather, there is very great likeneſſe: For, as in the ſickneſſe of the body, there bee three degrees to the obtaining of health, that is to ſay, the

1. Knowledge of the ſickneſſe,
2. The knowledge of the remedy,
3. And the applying of it:

So alſo it fareth with our ſpirituall ſickneſſe, ſinne. For whoſoeuer hath acknowledged that ſickneſſe, hath attained the firſt degree of health. If hee know the remedy, which is Chriſt, he is in the ſecond. But all this is to no purpoſe, except the remedy be applied by faith.

Theoph.

Theoph. Let vs therefore come to the third. What is it properly to beleeue in God?

Mat. When we speake of God, we say that we beleeue three manner of waies.

To beleeue what it is.

1. First, to beleeue one God.
2. Secondly, to beleeue God.
3. Thirdly, to beleeue in God.

Whereof the two first are the degrees, by which at length we come to the third.

To beleeue one God, is as much to say, thou beleeuest that there is one God.

To beleeue God, is to beleeue that God is true concerning his promises declared in his word.

To beleeue in God, is, according to those promises, to put thy whole trust and hope in God: and this belongeth to the faithfull onely; who, by true faith, apply those promises to themselues.

Who be Infidels.

Theop. Thou dost then account them infidels, that stand still in the first or second degree?

Mat. I doe indeed. For they beleeue no more then the diuels themselues doe.

Theoph. Thou hast satisfied me. We are therefore to come to the parts of the Creed.

Mat. They are foure.

The parts of the Creed.

1. Of Faith in God the Father.
2. Of Faith in his sonne, Iesus Christ.
3. Of Faith in the holy Ghost.
4. Concerning the Church.

Why our faith is referred to each person by it selfe.

Theoph. But why is our faith distinctly referred to euery person by it selfe? seeing that it is one God, in whom we beleeue?

Mat. That our faith may bee the better strengthened: which is then done, when wee consider distinctly and apart, as each person according to his distinct propertie, hath wrought in our saluation. Notwithstanding, our faith is neuer a whit the lesse referred to one God.

Theoph. How?

Mat. For it is all one, as if a man should say, I put all my hope and trust in one God, of whose loue I cannot doubt at all. For, whereas hee is distinguished into three persons, euery

euery one of them confirmeth in me the assurance of that loue. For, the Father hath both created mee by his omnipotency, and doth also guide me by his mercifull prouidence. The Son hath redeemed me by his death, reconciled me to God the Father, and euen yet maketh intercession to him for me. The holy Ghost, by his diuine power, hath sanctified mee, and ioyned mee with Christ and his Church; that with it I might bee made partaker of all his gifts, vntill he bring me euen to eternall life.

The first part of the Apostles Creed: which is of Faith in God the Father.

Theoph. In this exposition of the Creed, which thou hast euen now made, there be some few things, whereof I will aske thee. I will keepe the order of the parts in propounding my questions.

I will therefore begin with God the Father: by whose gracious prouidence, thou saidst that wee are ruled. First, I demand therefore, whether the Father onely created vs? Whether the Father onely created vs. 1. 2.

Secondly, why thou makest here mention of his mercifull prouidence; whereof there is no one word in the Creed. Now answer me to the first.

Mat. Those three persons (forasmuch as they haue all one essence, namely the Godhead, and therefore are one God) doe nothing apart or asunder one from the other. Therefore, both in our creation, redemption, and sanctification, euery one of the persons wrought according to their distinct property.

Theoph. In those three diuine works, shew mee this distinctly.

Mat. Concerning the creation, the Scripture doth teach vs, that the Father made all things by his word, that is to say, by his Sonne, and by his Spirit. Concerning our redemption, the Father, saith Christ, so loued the world, that he gaue his only begotten Sonne to the death for our redemption: which death the Sonne suffered by the power of the holy Ghost. The same also is to bee vnderstood of our sanctification: whereof the Father is, as it were the originall fountaine. For, Christ, praying for the faithfull, saith; Father, sanctifie them. The matter of our sanctification is Psal. 33. 6. Ioh 3. 16. Heb. 9. 14. Ioh. 17. 17. 19.

in the Sonne. For he addeth, I ſanctifie my ſelfe, that they alſo may be ſanctified. And the holy Ghoſt is, as it were a conduite, through the which that holineſſe floweth from Chriſt who is the head, into vs that are his members.

Why the Scripture aſcribeth creation to the father, redemption to the Sonne ſanctification to the holy Ghoſt. Gen. 1.

Theoph. How commeth it to paſſe then, that the Scripture aſcribeth Creation to the Father, Redemption to the Sonne, and Sanctification to the holy Ghoſt?

Mat. It is in reſpect of our rudeneſſe: becauſe the worke of the Father is more manifeſt and euident in the creation, the worke of the Sonne in the redemption, and the worke of the holy Ghoſt in the ſanctification. For, in the creation the Scripture ſetteth the Father before vs, as ſome mightie King commanding,

Philip. 2:7.

In the redemption, it ſetteth foorth the Sonne: who manifeſted himſelfe vnto men, in the fleſh; wherein he ſuffered death for vs.

Tit. 3, 6. 1. Cor. 6. 19. Act. 4. 24. Rom. 7. 25. 2. Cor. 12. 3.

In the ſanctification, it ſetteth foorth the holy Ghoſt: who putteth forth his diuine vertue and force, whereby he dwelleth in vs. Hence it is, that the Father is called CREATOR; the Sonne OVR LORD, that is to ſay, redeemer, and the Spirit HOLY; to the end we may vnderſtand, that we are ſanctified of it.

How Lord ſignifieth redeemer.

Theoph. Wherefore ſaieſt thou, that, when the Sonne is called our Lord, it is all one as if a man did call him Redeemer?

Mat. Becauſe hee hath gotten this dominion or Lordſhip, by his redeeming of vs. For thereby he hath deliuered vs from the tyranny of the diuell, and ſubiected vs to his owne kingdome.

Why the holy Ghoſt is called holy.

Theoph. I had thought, that the holy Ghoſt had beene therefore called holy, to note the holineſſe wherewith hee is endued.

Mat. Surely, in that ſence, there is no more cauſe to call him holy, then the Father or the Sonne; who, it is certaine, are alſo holy: But he is called holy, in reſpect of the holineſſe, which he worketh in vs.

Theoph. Touching the firſt part, I require no more. I come therefore to the other. Wherefore makeſt thou mention of the gracious prouidence of God, whereof the confeſſion of our faith maketh no mention?

Mat.

Mat. The prouidence of God is ioyned to the creation with so neere a band, that, of the one, the other doth necessarily follow. For it is altogether contrary to the nature of God, to neglect all his creatures after hee hath once made them; especially when we speake of the elect, for whose saluation he deliuered his onely begotten Son to death. Albeit therefore God do guide all things by his prouidence, as hath bin immediately afore declared of vs; yet, after a special maner he looketh vpō the faithful, to be at hand for the reliefe of their wants, & to deliuer them from dangers; whom whosoeuer toucheth, toucheth the apple of his own eie. Now, all these things are not darkly comprehended in the article, which is concerning faith in God the Father. Of the prouidence of God toward the faithfull. Zach. 2. 8.

Theoph. Goe to therefore, goe on with euery particular.

Mat. When wee call God father, it is first no doubt in respect of Christ, who is the only begotten Sonne. Notwithstanding, from thence we gather, that he is a Father to vs, whom through him, he hath adopted and taken for his children. Therfore, the name of Father doth secretly containe in it, the loue of God toward vs. But he is called omnipotent, not so much that we may vnderstand he is able to doe whatsoeuer he will; as that wee may know hee not onely willeth well to vs, but can also doe what hee willeth; so as nothing at all can let him from beeing assistant to vs. I beleeue in God the Father.

Finally, he is said to be the maker of Heauen and earth; not onely to teach vs, that all things in Heauen and earth were made by him: but also to make it appeare to vs, that he hath all things in his power, that they may be aiding to vs, if neede be; and that he doth so bridle the diuell, and all our enemies, that they cannot hurt vs. Therefore the faithfull doe not in vaine, put their trust in God; but with DAVID may say, The Lord is with me I will not feare what man can doe to me. Maker of heauen and earth. Act. 4. 24. Psal. 56.

Although I should walke in the valley of the shadow of death, I will feare no ill, because thou art with me. Psal. 23 4.

Theoph. But oftentimes it falleth out, that the faithfull are most cruelly handled by their enemies.

Mat. That neuer commeth to passe, vnlesse God will it: without whome, not one haire can bee pluckt from vs. Math. 10 30.

Whereby it is, that hee who loueth vs, (for he is our Father, and is omnipotent) doth not suffer them to do it, but for our great good.

Theoph. Were it not more fit, if wee said (according to the common receiued opinion) that this commeth to passe onely by Gods sufferance, and not by his will?

Mat. No man can separate the sufferance of God from his will but hee doth manifest iniury to God, and taketh from vs a great part of our comfort.

Theoph. Why so?

Mat. Because, thereby God should bee made idle, and all occasion of putting our trust in him should be taken away. And indeede the state of the faithfull were most miserable, if they lay open to the assaults of raging Satan, and to the bloody lust of the vngodly. But the holy Scriptures teach vs far otherwise; that the diuell could doe nothing to IOB, before he had obtained leaue of God: also that he could not enter into the swine, but when Christ bad him: and that the wicked be in the hand of the Lord; that SENNACHERIB, the enemy of Gods people, was the rod of Gods wrath, and the staffe of his hand.

Iob 1. 12.

Math. 8. 31.
Psal. 17. 14.
Isay 10. 5.

Theoph. But how can it be, that euil should be committed by the will and appointment of God, and yet he allow it not? Is not this altogether vnworthy of God? Moreouer, if that were true, the wicked were not to be blamed, seeing that when they doe euill, they execute the will of God.

Mat. Although euill cannot be committed, without the will and appointment of God: yet he neither willeth nor alloweth it, so farre forth as it is euill, but rather abhorreth it as cleane contrary to his nature: But the good which by his maruellous wisedome hee bringeth out of those euils he both willeth and alloweth. Which may be seene in the very death of Christ: whome PETER affirmeth to haue beene deliuered by the determinate counsell and foreknowledge of God; (out of the which hee brought the saluation of the world) although hee neither allowed the treason of IVDAS, nor the wicked enuy of the Iewes.

Psal 5. 5.

Act. 2. 23.

From hence it is, that albeit the wicked doe the will of God, yet are they no whit the lesse guilty before him. For they haue no purpose to doe it.

Theoph.

Theoph. Therefore, vnleſſe I bee deceiued, the wicked do not the will of God: but God doth his will by the wicked.

Ma. Thou iudgeſt rightly. For the purpoſe of the wicked, in doing the will of God, is farre vnlike the purpoſe of God himſelfe. Which ISAIAH himſelfe doth plainely note, ſpeaking of SENNACHERIB. For, after he had affirmed, that he was the rod of Gods wrath, & the ſtaffe of his hand, whom he ſent to a diſſembling nation, whom alſo he wold command to rob, and take the ſpoile of the people whom the Lord was angry with, ſtraight way hee addeth, But he thinketh not ſo, neither will his heart eſteeme it ſo. For he imagineth to root out, and to cut off not a few nations. Iſay. 10. 7.

Theoph. God therefore is a maruellous workman, who can vſe an inſtrument to the performing of his worke.

Ma. Yea indeed: hee vſeth both good and euill, to his glory; but in far vnlike reſpects. For, he guideth the affections of the former, namely of the Angels and of the faithfull, by his holy ſpirit: ſo as the worke, which hee doth by them, is altogether good. But the other, that is to ſay the diuell and the wicked, are egged forward by their owne malice, and ſo they do altogether varie from God; who neuertheleſſe, by his wonderfull wiſedome, doth ſo gouern their actions, that in the end they fall out to his glory.

Theoph. This doctrine agreeth excellently with that which I haue heard of thee mote then once, namely, that the ſinnes of the wicked bee from themſelues: but, while they ſinning they doe tuia or that thing, that is of God.

Ma. Thou gathereſt well. For, ſo doth God exerciſe his iudgements. For, hee puniſheth ſin with another ſinne, and, for the moſt part, with a ſinne of the ſame kinde: as murther with murther, theft with theft, according to the vnchangeable ſentence pronounced by himſelfe; Whoſoeuer ſheddeth mans blood, by man ſhall his blood be ſhed. Gen. 9. 6. Woe to thee that ſpoileſt: when thou haſt made an end of ſpoiling, thou ſhalt be ſpoiled. Iſay. 33. 1.

Theoph. But oftentimes it falleth out that the wicked proſper, ſo as they bee free from all aduerſitie, yea from deſerued puniſhments; and the godly euery where be preſſed downe with afflictions.

Ma. God puniſheth ſome ſins in this world; that both his

his prouidence and iuſtice may appeare: for elſe he might ſeeme not to care what men did. And againe, hee leaueth many things vnpuniſhed; that we may vnderſtand, there is another life after this, wherein he will moſt ſeuerely reuenge all the ſinnes of men, yea, with the grieuouſneſſe of their puniſhment equall the long patience wherewith hee endured them, and whereby through innumerable benefits he allured them to repentance.

But concerning the afflictions of the godly, when God ſendeth them, he hath regard both to his owne glory, and to our ſaluation. For according to the ſaying of the Apoſtle, All things worke together for the beſt, to them that Rom. 8. 28. loue God. I omit, that it may be there are many hypocrites among the faithfull, whoſe ſins God doth worthily puniſh.

Theoph. But, what profit may the faithfull reape by their afflictions?

The profit gotten by afflictions. *Mat.* What profit? Not one kinde, but many: which for the helpe of memorie, I will bring into ſixe heads of chiefe points.

Theoph. Declare the firſt.

1. Humilitie. *Mat.* By them, God bringeth vs to humilitie: while, by our owne experience, he prooueth, that whatſoeuer goodly matter we wondered at in our ſelues, is nothing. From hence was that ſpeech of DAVID; With rebukes thou chaſtiſeſt man for iniquitie, and makeſt his beauty to conſume Pſal. 39. 11. as a moth: ſurely euery man is vanitie.

Theoph. What is the cauſe, that God doth ſo humble vs?

Mat. 1. Firſt, that all glorie and praiſe may bee giuen vnto him alone.

2. Secondly, that wee may put away that vaine confidence, which naturally ſticketh within vs; and ſo flie to him alone, and put our truſt in him.

3. Laſt of all, that we may be the better prepared to re- 1. Pet 5. 5. ceiue his gifts: which he giueth not but to the humble.

Theoph. Come now to the ſecond head.

2. Repentance. *Mat.* By afflictions, God calleth vs to true repentance. For when he correcteth our ſins, he doth it to make vs vnderſtand, how much he deteſteth ſin; (wherein we do not a litle flatter our ſelues) that ſo alſo we might deteſt it. And withall he tameth the rebellion of our fleſh, (as hu-

bandmen

bandmen are wont to tame their vnbroken or ſtubborne cattell, with the plough) and daily more and more teacheth vs obedience. Frō hence it is that DAVID ſaith; It is good for me that I was afflicted, that I may learne thy ſtatutes. Pſal.119. 71.

Theoph. This bringeth that to my remembrance, which before this time I haue heard of thee; namely, that God by afflictions doth correct our vices, that hee may allure vs vnto vertue.

Mat. Thou ſaieſt well. For euen as yron, if it be not occupied, is eaten with ruſt; and the earth, vnleſſe it be tilled, bringeth forth nothing but briers and brambles: So alſo the godly, if they be not exerciſed with diuers afflictions, doe as it were fall aſleepe in their pleaſures, and become dull and ſlow to Gods ſeruice; ſo as in ſteed of fruits beſeeming repentance, they bring foorth nothing but vanity and folly. Therefore the Apoſtle ſaith to the Hebrewes; Euery affliction for the preſent time ſeemeth not ioyous, but grieuous: but, afterwards, it yeeldeth the quiet fruite of righteouſneſſe, to them that are thereby exerciſed. Heb.12.11.

Theoph. It is now time we proceed to the third head.

Mat. By afflictions God worketh this in vs that wee learne to pitty ſuch as bee in diſtreſſe. For no man hath compaſſion, or ſuffereth with another, who himſelfe hath not ſuffered before. By this argument, the Apoſtle to the Hebrewes prooueth, that Chriſt will haue compaſſion vpon our afflictions, and that he will be our aduocate with his Father. Theſe be his words; We haue not a high Prieſt which cannot bee touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but ſuch a one, as was in all things tempted in the like ſort; yet without ſinne. 3. Pitying of others. Heb.4.15.

Theoph. Goe forward: declare vnto me the fourth head.

Mat. By afflictions, the Lord ſhaketh off our drouſineſſe, and doth ſtirre vs vp to earneſt prayer: Inſomuch as not without good cauſe, afflictions bee called the ſchoole of the holy Ghoſt, where we are taught to pray aright. The Lord alſo commandeth vs to pray in the time of trouble; and promiſeth that we ſhall be heard. Call vpon me in the time of thy trouble, and I will deliuer thee, and thou ſhalt glorifie me. Which all the faithfull doe often proue true in their owne experience. For as the ſame Prophet ſaith; 4. Prayer. Pſal.50.15.

Psal.34.19. The Lord is neere those that be broken in heart, and will saue the contrite in spirit.

Theoph. This is a most excellent vse of afflictions. Now declare the fift.

5. Triall of our faith. *Mat.* By them the Lord maketh our faith euident, that we may be assured of it, and strengthened in it. For, PETER saith; that, it is tried no otherwise, then gold is tried in a fornace of fire: which is a most fit similitude. For as fire is to the baser things; which either consumeth them (as, wood and straw) or else hardneth them (as it doth clay;) but pretious things, (such as be gold and siluer) it melteth and clenseth: so there be diuers effects of afflictions according to the varietie of the persons to whom they bee sent. For, they doe either consume the wicked through impatience, or else they harden them through despaire.

1 Pet.1.7.

1. On the other side, they soften the hearts of the godly, to make them call vpon God.

2. They clense their hearts: forasmuch as by afflictions, our concupiscence is mortified.

3. Finally, they try our faith. For, while the Lord doth temper the bitternes of them with his loue and gentlenes, hee causeth vs to take them patiently, and to fashion our selues to his most holy wil: and, by this meanes, our faith is manifested. Hereupō IAMES calleth afflictiōs, by the name of temptation or triall; Blessed is the man, which endureth temptation. For when he hath beene tried, he shall receiue the crowne of life. Whereunto also that is to be referred, which is spoken of PAVL; that affliction bringeth forth patience, patience experience, and experience hope. For, this the Apostle meaneth; that God, by the comfort which he bringeth vs in afflictions, prooueth to vs by experience the truth of his promises: where through, from thenceforth we are confirmed in the hope of eternall life.

Iam.1.12.

Rom.5.3.

Theoph. Indeede, the former foure vses of afflictions are most excellent; and this fift is nothing inferiour: hasten therefore vnto the last.

6. The renouncing of the world & desire of eternall life. *Mat.* By afflictions, God will call our minds away from these earthly things; that we may earnestly desire the life to come. For, the Israelites, if they had not beene ill intreated both in Ægypt and in the wildernesse, would neuer haue

haue throughly thought vpon going to the land of Canaan; which was a figure of the heauenly inheritance. Therfore God doth as a carefull nurse; who, when shee should weane the childe, laieth some bitter thing vpon the teat, to cause the child to hate and abhore it.

Thou hast now shewed how many waies afflictions be necessary for vs. Thou seest therefore that we are not without cause warned by the Apostle, to beare them patiently, as sent from God our Father, when hee saith; My sonne, despise not the chastening of the Lord: neither faint when thou art corrected of him. For, whom the Lord loueth he chastiseth, and scourgeth euery sonne whom he receiueth. If yee endure chastening, God offereth himselfe to yon as to sonnes. (For what sonne is there whome the Father chasteneth not?) But if yee bee without chastening, whereof they be al partakers, verily ye are bastards, and not sons. Afterward he addeth, Wee had the fathers of our bodies chastisers of vs, and we did them reuerence: should we not much more be in subiectiō to the Father of spirits that we may liue? For they indeed, for a few daies chastised vs, after their owne pleasure, but he, for our profit; that wee might be partakers of his holinesse: Heb. 12. 5 6. 7. 8.

Theoph. There is no cause, then, why the faithfull should in this world looke for prosperity onely.

Mat. True: vnlesse they will deceiue themselues, For otherwise, it were necessary, that

1. The diuell should be without enuy,
2. The world without malice,
3. And we our selues without sinne.

For the godly to be without afflictions it is impossible.

But, the diuell will alwaies burne in enuy against the faithfull; the world, with malice and madde hatred; and our sinnes will minister sufficient matter to God (who, neuertheles, euen therein hath care of our saluation) to giue the raines to those our enemies, to molest and trouble vs. Wherefore (according to the saying of the Apostle) let all such as desire to liue godly in Christ Iesus, make account that they shall suffer persecutions. Adde hereunto, that prosperity is not alwaies profitable for vs: nay, oftentimes it hurteth vs. 2. Tim. 3 12.

Theoph. Why so?

Mat.

Hurt growing of prosperity.

Mat. Because many times it hindereth our saluation. For it bringeth forth fruits altogether contrary to those which we reckoned vp euen now.

Pride.

1. For, it maketh vs proud and insolent; and keepeth vs from the knowledge of our sinnes.

2. It stirreth vs vp to serue our owne wicked lusts: and it is to them as nourishment or feuell, wherewith they are more and more set on fire.

3. It maketh vs negligent in praier; and, as it were, quencheth in vs the desire to pray.

4. It prouoketh vs to impatience, and wrath; and maketh vs void of the affection of mercy.

5. Finally, it maketh vs drunken with the loue of our selues and of the world; and draweth vs away from meditation on the heauenly life. Therefore, not without cause, the Scripture testifieth, that through many afflictions wee must enter into the kingdome of God. And these are, in many places of the Bible, called strikings; to the end wee might vnderstand them to be, as it were, certaine spirituall medicines, which are diuersly ministred to diuers persons, (by God himselfe, the best spirituall Physition) according to the quality of our sickenesse, and necessity. Notwithstanding, he dealeth alwaies, so gently with vs, that he suffereth vs not to be tempted aboue that we are able to beare. For, while he chastiseth vs with the one hand, he lifteth vs vp with the other, and causeth the issue of the affliction to be alwaies happy: & thus he maketh proofe to vs, of his bounty, and kindnesse in aduersitie, aswell as in prosperity. For sometimes he tempereth them both together, or else sendeth them by turnes; lest wee should be too much either puffed vp with prosperity, or throwne downe with aduersity. Hereupon, the Prophet saith; Weeping may abide in the euening; but ioy commeth in the morning. Yea, rather he vseth this variety and change, that wee may so much the more acknowledge what the sweetnesse of prosperity is, & be therfore more earnestly bent to yeeld him thanks. For, as it is in the prouerbe, HEE IS VNWORTHY OF THE SWEET, THAT NEVER TASTED THE SOVRE.

Act. 14 22.

1. Cor. 10 13.

Psal. 30. 5.

Theoph. Hitherto thou hast declared certaine very excellent chiefe points concerning afflictions: which if they be

be earneſtly fixed in our mindes, they will bring no ſmall comfort, nor a little ſtirre vs vp to patience. Now theſe, vnleſſe I be deceiued, are

1. Firſt, that afflictions come not to vs, but by the will of God.

2. That they be ſent to vs from God, to our good.

3. That God will aſſiſt vs to the patient bearing of them.

4. That God promiſeth vs a bleſſed iſſue, yea at length a full deliuerance.

5. Finally, that, by meanes of them, proſperity is made, after a ſort, more pleaſant and delectable.

Six ſpeciall points, for conſolation in aduerſity.

6. *Mat.* Thou paſſeſt ouer the chiefe point; namely, that fatherly loue of God which hee putteth in practiſe euen then when hee doth chaſten vs. For hee alwaies dealeth mercifully and graciouſly with vs, in the very afflictions. Which thing DAVID witneſſeth in theſe words, The Lord is mercifull and gentle, ſlow to wrath, and abundant in kindneſſe. He is not woont to chide alwaies, neither will hee keepe his wrath for euermore. He hath not dealt with vs according to our ſinnes: neither hath hee rewarded vs, according to our iniquities. For according to the height of the heauens aboue the earth, ſo exceeding is his kindneſſe towards them that feare him. As farre as the Eaſt is from the Weſt, ſo farre hath hee remooued our ſins from vs. As a father hath compaſſion on his children: ſo hath the Lord compaſſion on them that feare him. For, hee knoweth whereof we bee made: he remembreth that we are but duſt.

Pſal 103. 8. 9. &c.

Theoph. Why calleſt thou this the chiefe point?

Mat. Becauſe, vnleſſe we fixe our eies vpon that loue of God in our afflictions, all other comfort will be to no purpoſe. Contrariwiſe, if this go before, and they (which thou ere while recitedſt) doe follow, either I am greatly deceiued, or there is no affliction ſo hard which a faithfull man may not be able to ouercome; eſpecially if it be to bee ſuffered for the teſtimony of the truth of the Goſpell.

Theoph. Why ſo?

Mat. There may fiue cauſes be alleadged, beſide thoſe which thou haſt heard already.

Theoph.

Theoph. My heart longeth to heare them.

Afflictions for righteousnes.

Mat. The first is this; that, by afflictions for righteousnesse sake, the Lord vouchsafeth vs the honour to be Martyrs, that is to say, witnesses of his truth. And so hee turneth the punishment ioyned with shame, which wee haue deserued, into most glorious afflictions. Whereupon, PETER speaking of them, said; that, it is better, if so the will of God be, that doing well wee should bee punished, then doing euill.

1.Pet.3.17.

2. The other is, that by them wee are made like, not onely to the holy Patriarkes, Prophets, Apostles; and other Martyrs, which liued before our times: but also to Christ himselfe, who hath set himselfe before vs, as a patterne of them, to be imitated; with whom (saith the Apostle) wee shall not otherwise be glorified, except wee suffer with him.

Rom.8 17.
2.Tim.2.12.

3. The third is, because the glory of God, which ought to be far dearer to vs then our owne life, is this way not a little furthered. For, it oftentimes commeth to passe, that the very enemies of the Christian truth bee called to the knowledge of Christ, and the weake confirmed in it by our constancie and open confession of Gods name. Therfore it was well said of one of the ancient Fathers, that the blood of the Martyrs is the seed of the Church.

Tertul. in apol. aduers. gent.

4. The fourth is, that while wee be made partakers of Christs sufferings, the spirit of God resteth vpon vs, wherwith wee are maruellously comforted. For as the sufferings of Christ abound in vs: so our comfort aboundeth, through Christ.

1.Pet.4.14.
2.Cor.1.5.

5. The fift is, because our reward is great in heauen, as Christ himselfe witnesseth. Yea, rather he willeth vs to reioyce, and to leape for ioy, in the middest of afflictions. PAVL also saith the same, in these words; The momentany lightnesse of our affliction procureth vs a farre more excellent and an eternall weight of glorie; while wee looke not on things which are seen, but on things which are not seene. For, the things which are seene, are temporall: but the things which are not seene, are eternall. Therefore wee haue no occasion of heauinesse giuen vs, by suffering in this sort; nay rather we ought to take matter of exceeding

Mat.5.12.
Luk.6.23.

2.Cor.4 17.

comfort

comfort and ioy, as of the greateſt good which is wont to be giuen of God, and as of a ſpeciall gift which he giueth not but to his elect and moſt dearely beloued children. For PAVL teacheth, that it is giuen vs not onely to beleeue in Christ, but alſo to ſuffer for him. In another place alſo the ſame Apoſtle ſaith of himſelfe, God forbid that I ſhould boaſt in any thing, ſaue in the Croſſe of our Lord Ieſus Christ: whereby the world is crucified to me, and I to the world. Phil.1.29. Gal.6.14.

The ſecond part of the Apoſtles Creede: which is, of Faith in Chriſt.

Theoph. We haue ſpoken largely enough of the firſt part of the Creed: the matter therefore requireth that we come to the ſecond, which is concerning the Sonne, of whome thou ſaidſt we were redeemed, and that he did continually make interceſſion for vs.

I doe therefore demand of thee, in which Articles that redemption and interceſſion is contained?

Mat. Indeed redemption hath chiefly the foundation in the article of the death and paſſion of Chriſt, which is as it were the price of our redemption: For by it, ioyning thereto the reſurrection, we were deliuered from the Tyranny of the diuell, and brought into the liberty of Gods children, which Chriſt himſelfe witneſſeth in theſe words; The Sonne of man is come into this world to giue his life a price of redemption for many. The foundation of our redemption. Math.20.28.

Concerning his interceſſion: it is ioyned by PAVL with the article of ſitting at the right hand of God, as a part thereof. Theſe be his words, What is hee that ſhall condemne? It is Chriſt which is dead, yea rather which is raiſed vp from the dead, who alſo is at the right hand of God, & maketh interceſſion for vs. For becauſe the ſitting at the right hand of the Father is referred to the dignity, whereunto he is aduanced with the Father, by a ſimilitude taken from Kings, which are wont to place thoſe at their right hand, that be moſt welcome and acceptable to them, and whome they deſire to haue moſt honoured; therefore doth he ioyne his Interceſſion with it, to the end we might know, that Chriſt beſtoweth the great authoritie hee hath Rom.8.34.

with

with his Father in this, that by the benefit of his death, hee might become mercifull vnto vs.

Why there be in the Creed more articles of Christ then these three.

Theoph. Forasmuch as in these three articles of the death, resurrection, and the sitting of Christ at the right hand of the Father, the chiefe points of our saluation be contained, why were the other articles put into the Creed, especially seeing it is a summe, and as it were an epitome or abridgement of the things which are to be beleeued to our comfort and saluation?

Mat. It was, that our faith might be the better defenced, against the temptation of the diuell and the flesh.

Theoph. I do desire to haue these things declared by thee more at large, and to bee instructed to what temptation, each article of the faith is opposed or set against, that if at any time neede shall bee, I may make my vse of them.

The vse of the articles of the faith against three sundry temptations.

Mat. The things which haue beene spoken by mee in the former chapter, of the person and office of Christ, here is no cause in this place to repeat. This onely I will shew, that each article is placed in most exquisite order, to the end we might acknowledge in Christ, remedies against euery kinde of spirituall sicknesses, and against all the punishments which we haue deserued. As first of all, we indeede be conceiued in sinne, by meanes whereof it is that we are the children of wrath. The remedy against this euill, is that, which in the first place we beleeue of Christ, namely, that he was conceiued by the holy Ghost, that wee may know our conception to be sanctified in Christ, so as now euen from our first beginning, we are by him consecrated to God the Father.

Psal. 51. 7. Eph. 2. 3. Conceiued by the holy Ghost. Math. 1. 20.

Theoph. Why was it necessary, that for these things Christ should be conceiued by the holy Ghost?

Mat. Because the naturall order of humane generation is defiled and corrupted; so as it was altogether necessarie that the holy Ghost should haue the work in that conception, to purge and cleanse the substance of the Virgin, of whom he was conceiued; and that thus he might bee pure and free from the blot of originall sinne, wherewith if hee had bin defiled, hee himselfe should haue needed a reedeemer and mediator, so farre should he haue beene from redeeming vs, and from beeing able to reconcile vs to God

the

the Father. Adde hereunto, that there can bee no ioyning of the God-head with that that is vncleane.

Theoph. Wherefore, hauing mentioned this conception, is it by & by added, that he was borne of the virgin MARY? Borne of the Virgin Mary. Matth.1.16.

Mat. It was to teach vs, that he did not onely take our nature: as one which was made of a woman, as PAVL speaketh: but also that we might know him to be that very Redeemer and Messias promised to the fathers, Forasmuch as he was borne of a Virgin descending from ADAM to DAVID according to the Propheſies of the Prophets, and that in the time and place by them appointed. Gal.4.4.

Theoph. Why was it necessary that his mother should be a Virgin?

Mat. That both in his conception and natiuity, the worke of God might the more plainly appeare, and that there might be nothing wherby to darken it neuer so little.

Theoph. Declare the other Articles.

Mat. Because after our conception and birth, for the innumerable sins by vs daily committed, we had deserued to suffer euen in this life all manner of reproches and contumelies, and besides in time to come hereafter, most grieuous torments both in soule and body, it is expressly mentioned, that Christ suffered all those things for vs, when it is said, he suffered vnder PONTIVS PILATE: for vnder him, for vs, in our stead, he was bound, railed vpon, beaten and crowned with thornes. Moreouer, wee had deserued most cruell death with reproch and shame: this also Christ suffered for vs. For hee was crucified betweene two theeues, which kinde of death was accursed of God himselfe, for it was appointed for euill doers and wicked men. But by dying he ouercame death, so as death is now to vs, not deadly, but making aliue. Moreouer, the Iudge is named, vnder whom he suffered, not so much to prooue the certainty of the story, as to teach vs that Christ, notwithstanding hee were most iust & innocent, was for vs condemned before an earthly Iudge, as a guilty person, that by his most vniust condemnation, wee should haue full absolution and discharge before the iudgement seate of God.

Suffered vnder Pontius Pilate.

Crucified. Math.27.35.

Dead. Math.27.50.

Theoph. I desire to haue that more largely declared by thee, which I heard euen now of the death of Iesus Christ; namely

namely that by dying hee ouercame death, ſo as it is not now deadly vnto vs, but a making aliue.

How Chriſt brought death to death.

Mat. That thou maiſt vnderſtand theſe things rightly, it is to bee knowen, that death when it would haue ſwallowed vp Chriſt, in whom is the fountaine of life, was it ſelfe ſwallowed vp of him, ſo as hee became deadly to death, according to the Prophecy of HOSEA; O death I will be thy death. Seeing therefore by the death of Chriſt, death is ſwallowed vp in victorie, now the faithfull are deliuered from the tyranny of it. There is no cauſe then why we ſhould feare it, nay rather let vs bee bold to prouoke, and as it were to challenge death with the Apoſtle, crying out, O death where is thy victorie?

Hoſ.13. 14.

1.Cor.15.54.

Theoph. But it doth ſtill daily exerciſe his tyranny vpon the faithfull, for it killeth them.

Death deliuereth the faithfull from innumerable deaths.

Mat. Nay rather cleane contrariwiſe: for, while it ſeemeth to kill them, it deliuereth them from a thouſand deaths, that is to ſay, from the innumerable troubles of this world, to the end they may liue moſt bleſſedly in the heauens.

Theoph. Let vs goe forward to the reſt.

Mat. We had deſerued that our bodies after death, ſhould be thruſt into the graue, which is deaths priſon, and that our ſoules ſhould be caſt downe into hell, to be tormented with euerlaſting paines.

Chriſt, that he might remedy both the euils, would haue his body buried, that ſo he might purſue death it ſelfe being ready to die, into his owne hold, that is to ſay, into the graue: whoſe nature therefore hee changed, ſo as it is no more to vs the gaole of death, but a place appointed of God, wherein our bodies are kept againſt the day of the glorious reſurrection.

Act.7 60. 1. Theſ 4 13.

For this cauſe the Scripture affirmeth, that the faithfull departed, are not dead but aſleepe. Whereupon it came to paſſe, that the Fathers of the primitiue Church named thoſe places wherein the bodies of the faithfull were buried κοιμητήρια, that is to ſay, ſleeping places.

He deſcended into hell.

Moreouer, Chriſt would tarry in the graue ſome daies, that ſo it might certainly appeare, that he was dead indeed. But then he deſcended into hell for vs, when hee indured

thoſe

those most extreame torments & sorrowes, euen the wrath of God, which we had deserued. Now those were the euerlasting punishments, which we should haue suffered. Math. 26. 38.

Vpon the feeling of these sorrowes, hee sweat bloud in the garden, & not for feare of bodily death: for otherwise hee should haue beene the most fearfull of all other men.

Moreouer, these sorrowes caused that in the very agonie hee cried out; My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Yet not that God euer forsooke him, but because hee was in our stead, and offered himselfe to his Father as a baile for vs, it was necessary that his diuinity should be hidden for a time, vntill the humanity had suffered all the things, which both here, and in the world to come we had deserued. Howbeit the punishment which in respect of vs was eternall and endlesse, in Christ was made temporary, and hauing end, because he himselfe is eternall and infinite, and therefore he put an end to those euerlasting punishments, whereunto we are accursed. Luk. 22. 44. Math. 27. 46.

Theoph. But this article of Christs descending into hell is placed in the Creede after his buriall: wherefore it seemeth, that it cannot be referred vnto those paines which he suffered before death: for the order it selfe is against it. Moreouer, this selfe same thing seemeth to be contained in another article, euen in that, HE SVFFERED VNDER PONTIVS PILATE: in which words, not those paines onely are to be vnderstood, which he suffered in his body, but those also which he suffered in his soule.

Mat. This article of Christs descending into Hell, cannot otherwise be expounded, but as it hath beene expounded of me. For if it be referred to his burial, as some would haue it, bringing for the confirmation of their opinion those places of Scripture, wherin the graue it selfe is called by the name of Hell; it shall be nothing else, but a repetition of that which is farre more plainly set out in the former article: which indeede doth not agree to so short a summary as the Creed is. Much lesse is this article to bee vnderstood of Christs soule going downe into the place of the damned. For Christ said to the theefe, This day shalt thou be with me in paradise. Moreouer, there was no such thing further required, forasmuch as all things were Luk. 23. 43.

finiſhed vpon the Croſſe: for hee ſaid a little before his
Ioh.19.30. death, It is finiſhed. Concerning the order or method, it hath beene before declared by vs, that they which wrote this Creed looked vnto this, that in each article they might ſet before vs, the ſeuerall remedies, which bee miniſtred vnto vs by Chriſt, againſt all kinds of temptations and ſpirituall diſeaſes. Therefore they would not onely expreſſe the paines which he ſuffered in his body, but alſo the fearefull torments which hee ſuffered in his ſoule, and which vnto vs are moſt terrible, for theſe we haue deſerued to endure for euer in Hell it ſelfe: the temptations whereof farre exceede that which ariſeth of the afflictions
The order of the articles which reſpect Chriſt, of this life, yea and bodily death. Wherefore hauing comprehended all theſe paines generally in this article, He ſuffered vnder PONTIVS PILATE; afterward they would handle them particularly. And firſt of all, thoſe which he ſuffered in body, in theſe words; Hee was crucified, dead, and buried: for they purpoſely ioyned his buriall, that as it were in one row, they might comprehend al things, which appertaine to the abaſing of his body. Which beeing declared, they added thoſe horrible torments, which he ſuffered in his ſoule, in theſe words; He deſcended into Hell. Which they did, to the end wee may vnderſtand, that Chriſt when hee had ſuffered all the things, which wee ſhould haue ſuffered in Hell, did as much, as if by a locall deſcending, hee had deſcended into Hell it ſelfe; and that therefore we are free from it.

Theoph. Now do I very well allow the expoſition of this article which you haue deliuered, as that which bringeth vs no ſmall comfort. Yea I doe very well like the order of it ſelfe. For it is eaſier to apply the ſufferings of Chriſt to our ſelues, when they are reckoned vp in that order, wherein we ſhould haue ſuffered them, than in any other.

Mat. Thou iudgeſt rightly: for the temptation of the ſecond death, that is to ſay, of the puniſhments which abide for vs in hell, is wont to come into our minds after the temptation of the firſt death.

Theoph. Declare vnto me the other articles.

The third day he roſe again. *Mat.* The reſurrection followeth, by the which Chriſt ouercame death, hell, ſinne, yea the diuell himſelfe, and triumphing

triumphing ouer them, and leading them captiues, he ascended into heauen, whither he is gone vp with the greatest glory, not so much for himselfe, as thereby to open a way for vs, and to take possession of it in our name, vntill our soules come to possesse it after death, and bodie and soule together after the resurrection. But because so long as we here liue, euen after we are by faith made partakers of Christs gifts, we fall into many sinnes, which are wont to trouble our consciences, and to weaken our faith, it is by and by added, that hee sitteth at the right hand of the Father, to the end we might know, and be assured of that intercession which hath before beene mentioned. And so we might vnderstand, that after he had once suffered death vpon the Crosse for our sinnes, he doth continually offer the merit hereof vnto his Father for vs, and therefore causeth the Father himselfe to be fauourable vntō vs. Which thing PAVL sheweth in these words, Christ is at the right hand of the Father, and maketh request for vs.

Luk 24.17. Eph.4 8. He ascended into heauen. Act 1.9.

And sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. Col.3.1.

Rom 8.34.

More, he vseth that great authority whereunto he is aduanced, to the gouernment & helpe of his Church against all the hurts that might come vpon it, and to the accomplishment of our saluation. Finally, because (such is the weakenesse of our faith) some feare of condemnation in that last day may assaile our minds, wherein the Lord will render to euery one according to his workes: therefore that this temptation may bee met with, it is said further, that Christ which is our intercessor, shal also be our Iudge. And this is the meaning of that article, wherein we beleeue that he shall come to iudge quick and dead, euen that wee might be without all feare of condemnation; and contrariwise, certainly know, that by the sentence of the Iudge himselfe, we shall obtaine saluation.

Mat.16.27.

From thence he shal come to iudge quicke and dead.

Theoph. Who are those quicke and dead, who thou saiest shal be iudged of Christ?

Mat. The quicke are they which at that day shall bee aliue, who also as PAVL saith, shall be changed in the twinking of an eye: and the dead are they, whom death before shall haue taken out of the company of the liuing.

1.Cor.15 52.

Theoph. But is it necessarie; that the dead should rise againe in that day, of whom iudgement was giuen before,

whether they be good or euill?

Mat. These things shall not let their appearing at that day; and that for two causes:

1. The first, because that first iudgement pertaineth onely to the soule: but the latter to the whole man.

2. The other is, that that particular iudgement may be proclaimed before all men, and so there may bee a more manifest declaration of God his righteousnesse. Therefore the Scripture affirmeth, that in that day both good and bad shall bee iudged by Christ according to their workes: which without doubt shall be brought to light, as it were manifest testimonies, either of the faith, or the vnbeleefe, lying hid in the heart, although faith it selfe, or vnbeleefe in those that come to yeeres, be speciall causes either of the saluation or damnation of men, as it is declared by the Iudge himselfe; He that beleeueth in me, is not condemned: but he which beleeueth not, is condemned already, because he hath not beleeued in the name of the onely begotten Sonne of God.

Ioh. 3. 18 and 5. 24.

Theoph. I do now at length acknowledge all the articles which appertaine to the faith of Christ, to be indeed profitable, yea necessary to the establishment of our faith. I would notwithstanding know, why in the Scriptures his death onely is for the most part spoken of, as in that place of Paul: We are reconciled by the death of his Sonne.

Why Christs death is mentioned oftner in the Scriptures then the other things he did for vs. Rom. 5. 10. Rom. 4 25. 1. Cor. 15. 14.

Mat. By such kinde of speeches, the Scripture, desirous of breuity & shortnes, for the chiefe part nameth the whole. Neuertheless, sometimes his resurrection also is ioyned, because in it Christ ouercame death: whereupon it is, that the force of Christs death hangeth vpon his resurrection. For if Christ be not raised vp (saith Paul) our faith is vain. This also is to bee noted by the way, that the death of Christ is not seldome vnderstood by his bloud, because that powring out of his bloud, amongst other things which he suffered for vs, is very excellent and notable.

Theoph. Bring forth some testimonies for it.

Mat. They are to bee found euery where in the holy writings. Peace beeing made by the bloud of Christ, by him hee hath reconciled all things to himselfe: as well those that be in earth as those that be in heauen, that is to

Col. 1 20.

say

ſay, both thoſe that be in the Church already receiued into heauen, as thoſe that be yet in the militant Church below.

We were redeemed not with corruptible things, as ſiluer or gold: but with the pretious blood, as of a Lambe without ſpot, and vndefiled, euen of Chriſt. We are iuſtified by the blood of Chriſt. 1. Pet. 1. 19. Rom. 5. 9.

The third part of the Apoſtles Creed: which is, of Faith in the holy Ghoſt.

Theoph. Wee haue proceeded farre enough concerning faith in Chriſt. Now therefore we muſt come to the third part of the Creed, which is of the holy Ghoſt, whereunto thou diddeſt attribute, that it doth ſanctifie vs, and ioine vs with Chriſt. But there be two things, which I will propound vnto thee to be declared.

1. Firſt, wherein that ſanctification ſtandeth.

2. Secondly, in what ſence thou ſaieſt, that we are by the holy Ghoſt ioined with Chriſt, foraſmuch as euen now thou aſcribedſt that vnto faith.

Mat. The ſanctification which the holy Ghoſt worketh in vs, ſtandeth heerein, that it amendeth the corruption planted in our minds, & repaireth the decay of our ſoules, otherwiſe caſt away and vndone by originall ſinne.

Theoph. Declare to me the effects of that repairing.

Mat. Firſt of all, it lightneth our mindes, ſo as wee doe acknowlege the true God in Chriſt, and yeeld him the worſhip due to his maieſtie.

Secondly, it reformeth our harts, working faith in them, which pietie or godlineſſe followeth, that is to ſay, the loue and feare of God, from whence alſo ſpringeth repentance it ſelfe: for this faith which lieth hid in the heart, ſheweth it ſelfe, as it were viſible to the eies. But the ſanctification, whereof wee ſpeake, is not ſeldome called by the name of regeneration.

Theoph. Why is it called alſo by this name?

Mat. Becauſe, when the holy Ghoſt by his grace & vertue worketh in vs, ſtedfaſtly to beleeue the things which in former times we condemned, and that truely repenting wee doe the things which be directly contrary to our former actions: wee doe in very deede ſeeme to bee borne

Ephe.4. 24. 2 Cor.5.17. againe, and to be made new men, as PAVL speaketh: And verily all the parts and qualities of our soule are so reformed, as they may seeme to be altogether changed.

What our regeneration or sanctification is. *Theoph.* Therefore this sanctification or regeneration, is nothing else, but the repairing of the image of God; which was lost in ADAM.

Col.3.10. *Mat.* Thou iudgest rightly: and PAVL himselfe testifieth this, when hee saith, that wee haue put on the new man, which is renewed into knowledge, agreeable to the image or likenesse of him that created him. But Christ is hee, by whom that likenesse of God is brought from heauen vnto vs, and communicated by spirituall regeneration, euen as ADAM by carnall generation hath made vs partakers of sinne with him.

Theoph. Thou speakest of two generations, very much differing the one from the other, I meane the first which we haue from ADAM, from that which Christ worketh in vs by his Spirit.

1. *Mat.* Verily, by that first generation we are borne vnto sinne; but by this latter we are borne vnto righteousnesse.

2. By the first we are borne children of wrath; by the latter, children of God.

3. By the first we are borne vnto death; by the latter vnto euerlasting life. And for this cause Christ said to NICODEMVS, Except a man bee borne againe, hee cannot see the kingdome of God.

Theoph. Hitherto I haue heard what sanctification or regeneration is, namely that it consisteth in the vnderstanding of heauenly things concerning our saluation; and in the reformation of our heart and will, which causeth vs to beleeue in God through Christ, and to obey him. But how is it that the Apostle whom thou citedst speaking of this repairing, maketh mention onely of the vnderstanding, and not of the will? For he saith, that wee haue put on the new man, which is renewed into knowledge agreeable to the image of him that created him.

Mat. In that place indeede there is onely mention of knowledge, but vnder the name of knowledge are vnderstood both holinesse of life and reformation. Which also, in another place, are by name spoken by the same Apostle,

Apoſtle, when he ſaith, that that new man is put on which is created after God in righteouſneſſe and true holineſſe. Eph. 4. 24. Thou ſeeſt that in thoſe places, one part is taken for both, becauſe they are at once or together reformed by the holy Ghoſt, although in diuers manner. For to ſome hee giueth more knowledge than reformation. And contrariwiſe to ſome others, more zeale and reformation, than knowledge.

Theoph. But how is it, that there bee many alſo found, vnto whom there is giuen more then common knowledge of God, and of his truth, whoſe life notwithſtanding is moſt wicked?

Mat. Indeede I grant this, that God ſometimes giueth euen to the vnfaithfull ſome knowledge of his truth, which alſo for the moſt part is coloured with great words, & externall ſhew. But it is not the right knowledge of the true God, which is alwaies ioyned with his obedience. Neither indeede can any man know him, but hee is ſtraightwaies beloued of him: but that loue cannot ſtand, except we doe obey his commandements. Therefore IOHN ſaith, By this we know that we know him, if we keepe his commandements. He that ſaith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandements, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. 1. Ioh. 2. 3.

Theoph. But whether of thoſe two is the better, either the knowledge of God, or the obedience of his commandements?

Mat. Indeede knowledge is better than obedience in this, that it begetteth in vs both the loue and obedience of God, but eſpecially for that by it wee are transformed, as the Apoſtle ſpeaketh, from glory vnto glory, that is to ſay, as it were by certaine degrees, as that knowledge getteth increaſe in vs. Nevertheleſſe, that image or likeneſſe of God, doth not ſo expreſly ſhine in vs in knowledge, which for the moſt part lieth hid in the minde, as it doth in obedience, namely while we liue temperately, iuſtly, and godly: for thoſe excellent vertues declare vs not to be baſtards, but the true children of God. 2. Cor. 3. 18. Tit. 2. 12.

Theoph. Why ſo?

Mat. Becauſe as we are thought their children according to the fleſh, whoſe likeneſſe we haue concerning the bo-

die: so are we accounted his spirituall children, whose spirituall likenesse we shew in our workes.

Theoph. Thou callest the words of Christ to my remembrance, wherewith he reproueth the Scribes and Pharisies, boasting themselues to bee the children of ABRAHAM. If you were ABRAHAMS children, you would doe the workes of ABRAHAM. You are of your father the diuell, & the lusts of your father will you fulfill.

Ioh. 8. 39. 40.

Mat. Very truly. Hereunto also may bee referred that saying of Christ, which he addeth after that he had exhorted vs to holinesse of life; THAT YOV MAY BE THE CHILDREN OF THAT YOVR FATHER VVHICH IS IN HEAVEN. But this holinesse and reformation of life are effects and fruits of repentance, whereof mention was made before by vs, when we spake of sanctification.

Math. 5 45.

Of repentance.

Theoph. Let vs therefore now speake somewhat of repentance: and first what is repentance?

Mat. It is the hatred of sinne, and an earnest loue of righteousnesse, by the which we are continually stirred vp to abhorre our vices, and are mooued to do good workes, not for feare of punishment, or hope of reward, but for that loue we beare towards God, which worketh in vs, that with a ioyfull heart we are mooued to his obedience, and with griefe goe astray from his commandements. And therein is the promise fulfilled made vnto vs of God by his Prophets, namely that he will take from vs the stony heart, in stead whereof hee will giue vs an heart of flesh, wherein he will engraue his Law, that we may walke in his commandements. Hence it commeth, that the Law of God, which in former times was grieuous and hated of vs, is now not onely not grieuous, but most acceptable and delightfull, euen as it is written by the Prophets.

Ier. 31. 33. Ezc. 36. 26.

Psal 119 14. 97. 47.

Theoph. How many parts of repentance be there?

Mat. Two. Namely, 1. The mortification or killing of the old man, that is to say, of the corruption which by reason of sinne sticketh within vs. 2. And the resurrection of the new man.

The same also be the parts of regeneration: for it is necessarie that the holy Ghost doe first kill all euils, and euen corruption it selfe, before it plant good things in our hearts.

hearts. But that mortification hath it force from the death of Christ, of whom when we are make partakers by faith; he doth not onely blot all our sinnes, but also causeth that we acknowledge them, and being acknowledged, do hate them. Which thing PAVL teacheth vs in these words: This wee know, that our old man is crucified with Christ, that the body of sinne might be weakned, that heereafter wee should not serue sinne. Rom.6.6.

Moreouer, the rising againe of the new man which borrowing his force and efficacie from the resurrection of Christ, worketh strength in vs, by meanes wherof from the heart wee apply our selues to the obedience of God; which also the same Apostle plainly teacheth, where he saith: We are buried together with Christ by baptism into his death, that as Christ is raised vp from the dead, into the glorie of the Father, euen so should we walke in newnesse of life. Rom 6.4.

Theoph. Are then these two parts ioined together by so strict a band, that the former can neuer be seuered from the latter?

Mat. They are indeede: for it is impossible that any man should be partaker of Christs death, but the same also is partaker of the fruite of his resurrection. The Apostle expresly affirmeth it; If wee bee grafted with Christ to the similitude of his death, euen so shall we be to the similitude of his resurrection. For this cause so often as the Scripture speaketh of repentance, it doth not onely simply vnderstand some griefe conceiued for our sinnes, but reformation of life, and returning to a better course, which be witnesses of that sorrow lying hid in the heart. Therfore such as brag of repentance, and yet doe not returne, nor giue themselues to amendment of life, are liers, and doe mocke God himselfe. Rom 6.5.

Theoph. Thou saiest truely: for in our common life, he should be thought to mocke vs, that said he was sorrie hee had done vs wrong, and yet indeed continued in the thing it selfe. I doe rest satisfied in this doctrine of regeneration. But by it, that is not a little confirmed which was before proued by thee in the Chapter of MAN, namely, that man by his owne nature is the seruant of sinne, which neither vnderstandeth heauenly things that appertaine to his saluation,

uation, neither hath any freedome or power to doe that which is good. For seeing those faculties and powers are giuen vnto vs by the spirit of regeneration, it is without doubt that we lacke them, and therfore that we are altogether vnable of our selues to beleeue, or to doe well.

Of mans free will.

Theo. Thou gathereſt well. But becauſe this doctrine, concerning mans free-will, before this time, being as it is at this day in controuerſie, is notwithſtanding of great force to the eſtabliſhment of the glory of God, and of our owne ſaluation, although it hath before beene declared by vs, yet I will not thinke much to ſpeake of it againe, and to confirme it by teſtimonies of the Scripture. And firſt of all, concerning the true knowledge of God and of Ieſus Chriſt, which is the foundation of our ſaluation: Chriſt

Mat.11.17. himſelfe ſaith; No man knoweth the Son, but the Father, neither doth any man know the Father but the Son, & he

Ioh.6.44. to whom the Son will reueale him. No man can come to me except the Father that ſent me draw him. But concerning the will, and that power whereby we doe obey God,

Phil.2.13. PAVL ſaith. It is God which worketh in vs to will, and to performe it. Which alſo is confirmed of Chriſt himſelfe by a moſt fit ſimilitude, in theſe words; As the branch can

Ioh 15.4. beare no fruit of it ſelfe, except it abide in the vine, euen ſo neither can you, except you abide in me. He that abideth in me and in whom I abide, the ſame bringeth much good fruit; for without me you can do nothing. Which things being ſo, what can man of himſelfe beleeue in the matter of religion, but error & lies? what is he able to do when the queſtion is of worſhipping God, but all maner vice & wickedneſſe? I will adde a place out of PAVL wherein all this doctrine in on word is plainly ſet downe. You were dead in

Ephe.2.1. ſins and treſpaſſes. He ſaith not, that you were ſicke, ſo as ſome little life was left in you, but you were altogether dead. The ſelfe ſame thing alſo hee confirmeth afterward,

Ephe.2.5.6. when he ſaith; that, in being regenerated by God, we were raiſed vp from the dead. If therefore the vnregenerate man be ſpiritually dead in ſinnes, it followeth that he hath no more vnderſtanding in things pertaining to eternall ſaluation, than hath a dead man in the things of this life.

Moreouer, if a man vnregenerate be ſpiritually dead in ſinnes,

ſinnes, he hath no more power to doe a good deed, then a dead man hath to doe the actions of the body. Therefore euen as our ſoule giueth life to the body, ſo alſo the ſpirit of God is the life of our ſoule, being otherwiſe dead, and vnable to beleeue or do any thing that is good.

Th. Although I do wholly giue conſent to this doctrine, which I ſee hath expreſſe grounds in the holy Scriptures, yet I will propound vnto thee a certaine obiection, ſometimes put foorth to my ſelfe; about the anſwering whereof I found no ſmall difficulty: namely, that God ſeemeth to mocke vs, who ſo often by the Prophets exhorteth vs to turne vnto him, and to keepe his commandements, if it were not in our power, at leaſt in ſome part, to do this. Furthermore, that exhortations be made in vain, the vſe of admonitions is but needleſſe, and that reproofes are but ridiculous, if it were not in the power of the ſinner not to ſin.

Mat. They that meaſure the ſtrength of man by Gods commandements, be altogether deceiued. For Chriſt commandeth vs: Thou ſhalt loue the Lord thy God, with all thy heart with all thy ſoule, and with all thy mind. And againe, Be you perfect, as your Father which is in heauen is perfect. But what is hee which confeſſeth not, that hee can neuer come to that diuine perfection, nor loue him with that loue that is due? Mat. 23. 37.

Therefore as it is notably written by AVSTIN, God commandeth the things which we cannot doe, that wee might know what we ought to aske of him. Which indeed may appeare eué by this, that euery where by the Prophets, the Lord commandeth vs to turne vnto him, and to repent vs of our ſinnes. But IERRMY anſwereth, Conuert me Lord, & I ſhall be conuerted: when thou didſt correct me, I did repent. For this cauſe the ſame AVSTIN: which handled this doctrine of free-will moſt excellently, writeth in another place, O Lord giue me that which thou commandeſt, and command what thou wilt.

In Enchirid. ad Lauren
De gratia & lib. arbit. 16.
Ier. 31. 18.
Eze. 18. 30.
Ioel. 2. 2.
Confeſ. l. 10.

Theoph. Indeed this is a ſolution, or anſwere to that obiection, not to be deſpiſed.

Mat. I doe adde, that it may bee gathered out of PAVL, that exhortations to holineſſe of life, haue not their foundation vpon our naturall powers, but vpon the promiſe of God,

God, wherein he promiseth to be with vs, not to helpe our Freewill in part, but wholly and altogether himselfe alone to make it good in vs.

Theoph. Bring some places out of PAVL, for the confirmation of this doctrine.

1. Thes. 5. 23. 24. *Mat.* Writing to the Thessalonians, when hee hath admonished them to liue blamelesly, iustly, and soberly, in loue and in patience, hee praieth to sanctifie them, to the end they might be able to performe those things: and at length saith; Faithfull is hee that hath called you, which will also doe it. In another place also, after he had exhorted the Philippians, to worke out their owne saluation with feare and trembling, presently hee addeth: For it is God which worketh in you both the will and the deede, euen of his good pleasure.

Phil. 2. 12. 13.

Theoph. What vse is there of exhortations, admonitions, and reprehensions to the vnbeleeuers.

Mat. They shall be a witnesse against them, when they come to the iudgment seate of God: For they shall the more bee conuinced of rebellion against God, and of the hardening of their owne hearts.

Theoph. I am now well furnished against those, that shall hereafter set vpon me with that obiection.

To conclude, it seemeth to mee, that this doctrine may fitly be referred to that, which sometimes I haue heard of thee; namely, that all the sinnes of men be of themselues, and not of God; but that their good workes, if they doe any, be not of themselues, but of God.

Mat. True. Neither is there any cause, why we should feare to receiue this for true doctrine, forasmuch as it tendeth both to the glorie of God, and the throwing downe of our selues, which is a most certaine marke, whereby we may discerne or know true doctrine from false, according to the rule of Christ.

Ioh. 7. 18.

In what sence the holy Ghost is said to be author of our vnion with Christ.

Theoph. Now wee are to goe forward to the rest. Wee haue at large handled the first effect of the holy Ghost, let vs therefore come to the other. How makest thou the holy Ghost the author of our vnion, or being made one with Christ, which in the beginning of this Chapter, thou didest attribute vnto faith?

Mat.

Mat. When I did attribute or giue it to faith, I did it according to the vſe of the Scripture: but this I meant, that faith is the inſtrument, and as it were a ſpirituall hand, by the which we doe receiue Chriſt with all his gifts. In the meane time, this is to be vnderſtood, that the holy Ghoſt is author of them al. For the vniting of vs to Chriſt, which is in heauen, is not done but by his owne diuine power: Adde hereunto, that the holy Ghoſt begetteth faith in vs, & thereby ſanctifieth vs, that ſo we may be made fit to receiue Chriſt, & apply him with all his gifts vnto our ſelues.

The fourth part of the Apoſtles Creede: which is concerning the Church.

Theoph. We haue expounded three parts of the Creed: it remaineth that wee come to the fourth, which concerneth the Church. Now there come two things into my minde, whereunto, I would haue thee to anſwer. Firſt,

1. What the Church is; and
2. Why thou ſaiedſt, that by the working of the holy Ghoſt, we are ioyned with it.

Mat. The word Church, ſignifieth a companie: in this place it is taken for the company of the faithfull choſen of God. What the Church is.

But although the Church bee onely one, which is the ſpouſe and the myſticall body of Chriſt, yet it is wont to be conſidered in two reſpects:

1. As it is inuiſible. And
2. As it is viſible.

Of the inuiſible Church.

Theoph. What doeſt thou vnderſtand by the name of the inuiſible Church.

Mat. All the elect, which may be diuided into three ſorts.

1. The firſt, of them which already bee receiued into heauen, who are therfore called the Triumphant Church, becauſe, hauing ouercome all temptations and troubles, they enioy the heauenly glory.

2. The ſecond is, of them which do yet liue in the earth.

3. The third of them that are yet vnborne. Now theſe three parts in that laſt day, ſhall be gathered together into one body, and they ſhall bee a Church altogether triumphant and glorious.

Theoph.

Of the visible Church.

Theoph. Which is the visible Church?

Mat. The company of the faithfull, gathered together in the name of Christ, to be instructed and confirmed in his faith, by the sincere preaching of the word, as also by the right and lawfull vse of the Sacraments; which are two most certaine markes, wherewith God would marke her out, and as it were set her forth to be seene, that shee might be knowen of all her children, and they might be gathered vnto her.

Now this is that which is called the Militant Church, becauſe continually it warreth with the diuel, the flesh, and the world.

Theoph. Why will God haue all his children ioyne themselues to the visible Church?

Mat. That he may be worthipped of vs, which is, when we doe agree together in calling vpon him, and that he, as a good housholder, may feed vs with his word the spirituall foode, wherewith we may be daily strengthened, vntill he bring vs to the celestiall inheritance.

Theoph. What is the vse of this article?

Mat. You shall most easily perceiue it, if you doe but marke the testimonies of praise and commendation, wherwith PAVL decketh the Church, which indeede are answerable to diuers places of the Prophets. Now they be three, and that most excellent: For he termeth her,

1. Tim. 3. 15. 1. The house of God.

Gal. 4 26. 2. The pillar of truth.

3. The mother of all the faithfull.

Theoph. Wee are to examine the reason of these titles giuen vnto her. And first of all, why doest thou call it the house of God?

Mat. That we may vnderstand, that God dwelleth in his Church, doth defend it and guide it by his holy Spirit. Euen as Christ himselfe saith: Where two or three bee met together in my name, there am I in the middest of them.

Math. 18. 19.

Theoph. Why is it called the pillar of truth?

Mat. Because by the ministery thereof, God preserueth his truth in the world.

Theoph. What is that truth?

Mat. Christ himselfe, when as hee is acknowledged to be

be not only very God & very man in one person, but also a Sauiour and Redeemer, which is the most certaine truth, and most profitable to the beleeuers: for by it they attaine eternall life. Which Christ himselfe affirmeth in these words: I am the way, the Truth, and the Life. Ioh. 14. 6.

Theoph. Therfore it followeth, that this Church which we beleeue, forasmuch as it is the pillar of truth, cannot erre.

Mat. Indeede in those points which appertaine to the person and office of Christ, it cannot erre: but in some other parts of doctrine it may erre, which falleth out not seldome.

Theoph. Why may it not erre in the things which concerne Christ, as well as in others?

Mat. Because by the testimony of PAVL, Christ is the onely foundation of the Church, which being taken away, it can no more stand, than an house without a foundation. 1 Cor. 3. 11.

Theoph. What if the Church erred in those things?

Mat. It should then not be a Church but rather the Synagogue of Satan: seeing it had ouerthrowen or pulled downe Christ the true foundation of it.

Theoph. But Christ seemeth to haue ordained another foundation of the Church beside himselfe, namely PETER the Apostle, to whom he said, Thou art PETER, and vpon this rocke will I build my Church. Of the foundation of the Church.

Mat. The name of rocke no way can or ought to be referred vnto PETER himselfe, although the words may seeme to beare it. For PAVL affirmeth, that no other foundation can be laid by any, besides that that is laid, which is Iesus Christ. Moreouer, how absurd a thing should it bee that the Church which is inuisible, should haue her foundation in mortall man, and that which more is, one very weake, so as not long after he denied Christ? Verily it hath neede of a stronger foundation, that it may bee able to stand against so many assaults, wherewith it hath beene and still is set vpon, by the diuell and the world: euen from the beginning. 1 Cor. 3 11.

Theoph. Deliuer therefore the true sence of these words of Christ to PETER.

Mat. Because PETER had confessed Christ to bee the Sonne of the liuing God, Christ answereth; But I say that thou

Math. 4. 18. and 10. 2.

thou art PETER. Now hee is called by that name which Christ had before giuen vnto SIMON, becáuse he was a liuing ſtone in the building of the Church, who acknowledged Christ to be the Sonne of God, and therefore the chiefe ſtone in the Church. When therfore he addeth; Vpon this rocke I will build my Church, that is referred to that rocke, which PETER himſelfe had confeſſed. AVSTIN agreeth with this interpretation: for he ſaith; The Church is built vpon the rocke, wherof euen PETER had his name: therefore truly the Lord ſaith; Vpon that rocke, will I build my Church, PETER had ſaid; Thou art Chriſt the Sonne of the liuing God. Vpon this rocke therefore, ſaith he, which thou haſt confeſſed, I wil build my Church. For the rocke was Chriſt, vpon the which foundation, PETER himſelfe was builded: For no other foundation can any man lay, but that which is already laid, which is Chriſt Ieſus. Theſe be the words of that Father: wherewith alſo agreeth that which PETER ſaith, when hee exhorteth the faithfull, that as liuing ſtones, they would be built vpon Chriſt that chiefe ſtone. But he proueth this out of the teſtimony of ESAY: Behold I put in Sion a chiefe corner ſtone, elect and precious, in whom whoſoeuer beleeueth ſhall not be aſhamed. He addeth alſo out of the Pſalme: The ſtone which the builders refuſed, is made the head of the corner, that is to ſay, vpholdeth all the building.

Vpon Ioh. tract. 12 4.

1. Pet. 2. 5.

Theoph. Hitherto we haue heard ſufficiently of the ſecond thing teſtified in the praiſe of the Church: we muſt come to the third. Why is it called the mother of vs all?

Mat. Firſt, becauſe God therein hath begotten vs with the incorruptible ſeed of his word. And then, becauſe hee hath put vs ouer vnto it, as to a ſpeciall good mother, to be gouerned and brought vp, that wee may daily increaſe and grow in faith, vntill wee attaine to the inheritance of our heauenly Father. Wherefore, whoſoeuer refuſe the gouernment of his mother, can neither haue God for their Father, nor claime to themſelues any right in his inheritance.

Why the Church is called holy.

Theoph. Let vs conſider the very words of the Creede, and firſt of all; Why is the Church called holy.

Mat. For two cauſes: the firſt and chiefeſt whereof is this,

this, because as PAVL speaketh, It is sanctified after that he hath cleansed it, by the washing of water, through the word. As if he should say, that it was made cleane from all sinne, by the pretious blood of Christ, which is daily presented vnto vs, both in the word and in the Sacraments. Eph. 5. 26.

The other cause is, for that the members of it, which indeede are regenerated and sanctified by the holy Ghost, do apply themselues diligently to holinesse of life, wherein by the benefit of the Ministry of the Church, they go forward euery day somewhat. Notwithstanding, in themselues it is certaine, they bee defiled with many filthinesses and sinnes, which indeed are not imputed vnto them: for they are partakers of Christs merits, by whose helpe they obtaine forgiuenesse of sinnes.

Theoph. Let vs come to the other title of the church: why is it called Catholike or Vniuersall?

Mat. That we may vnderstand, it is not now tied to any certaine place or people, as we reade, it was vnder the law, before the comming of Christ: but that it is dispersed and scattered throughout the whole world, and distinguished into many members, which are particular Churches, gathered together in sundry places, which notwithstanding make one body of the Church, for they bee endued with the same faith, and hope in Christ. Why the church is called Catholike.

Theoph. It may seeme then, that the Church which was before the comming of Christ, was diuers from ours. Of the church before Christ.

Mat. Thou gatherest ill: for although in some circumstances it differed from ours, yet it was one Church in substance, forasmuch as both of them acknowledge,

1. One and the selfe same Father, God.
2. One Iesus Christ, redeemer, and mediator.
3. Because also that old church had the same hope with vs, namely to obtaine saluation by faith in him; by the which faith the beleeuers euen then communicated with his body, and therefore were partakers of all his gifts.
4. Because they had the same ministery of the word and Sacraments with vs, as concerning the substance.

Theoph. But how could this be, that the faithfull should be partakers of the true body of Christ, which was not yet borne?

Mat. It was then indeede ſpiritually receiued by faith, as it is this day of vs: this onely is the difference, that our faith looketh to Christ now long agoe manifeſted; but the faith of thoſe Ancients looked to Christ, which was not then come. Neither were they therefore excluded from the true partaking of him. For all things are preſent with God. Hence is that of Iohn; The Lamb (meaning Christ) Apoc. 13. 8. ſlaine euen from the foundation of the world.

Christ alſo affirmeth the ſelfe ſame thing; when he ſaith, Iohn. 8. 56. ABRAHAM reioyced to ſee this my day, and hee ſaw it, and was glad.

Theoph. But be there any places of Scripture, whereby this may be determined, that the faithfull, which were vnder the Law, were truly and indeede partakers of Christs body?

Mat. There be. For PAVL ſaith, That all the fathers did 1 Cor. 10. 3. eate the ſame ſpirituall foode with vs, and that they all dranke the ſame ſpirituall drinke: for they dranke of the ſpirituall rocke that followed them, and that rocke was Christ. By which words hee meaneth, that the fathers by their Sacraments did no leſſe communicate with the body of Christ and his gifts, than we doe at this day by ours.

Theoph. What then is the difference betweene their and our Church?

Mat. There be reckoned not one, but foure.

1. Firſt, becauſe the olde Church did ſet forth Christ his death and reſurrection darkely, by certaine outward ceremonies, as ſacrifices, lights, waſhings, and ſuch other, Col. 2. 17. which of the ſame Apoſtle are called ſhadowes of things to come, but the body is Christ.

Wherefore, ſeeing that by his comming he hath put an end to thoſe ceremonies, he hath now diſcouered and manifeſted himſelfe far more openly to vs. For he commeth forth, as it were in the mid-day, abounding with his gifts, that euery one may ſee and know them. For this cauſe the Apoſtle compareth the fathers which liued vnder the law, vnto children, which did learne as it were their letters and firſt grounds, to giue vs to vnderſtand, that we may be called learned and skilfull, if we be compared with them.

This therefore is the difference.

Theoph.

Theoph. Declare the second.

Mat. This consisteth in amendment of life: for as the knowledge of Christ is greater, so also the efficacy and working of the holy Ghost is far greater, which mortifieth our flesh; so as we do more earnestly obey his commandements, according to the promises declared by the Prophets; This is the couenant which I will make with the house of Israel: After those daies (saith the Lord) I will put my Law in their inward parts, and will write it in their hearts: I will put my spirit within you, and will cause you to walke in my statutes, and to keepe my iudgments, that you may doe them. Yet, not that the godly before the comming of Christ, were without the spirit of regeneration, but that we might be taught how the Lord in the very comming of Christ, by whose bloud he renewed the couenant with vs, did more abundantly bestow his gifts vpon his people. For this cause the Lord did suffer not a few blemishes of the Israelites, which among vs were not to be borne: no otherwise then as a most wise Father will beare with many childish faults of his sonnes, as long as they be children, but when they be come to yeares, he will in no case beare them. Ier. 31. 33. Eze. 36. 7.

Theoph. I would haue thee shew me some example.

Mat. I will alledge one; The bill of diuorcement, which was nothing else but a liberty to put away the wife, euen for the smallest cause. But the Lord affirmeth that it was permitted to the Israelites, for the hardnesse of their harts, that is to say, as well for their rudenesse, as for their infirmity. Notwithstanding he sheweth, That for the time to come it was not lawfull, but for fornication. Math. 19. 8.

Theoph. But it may be obiected, that wee are so farre off, from excelling the fathers of the Israelitish church, in holinesse and sanctimony of life, that contrariwise, there bee not a few of them found, which did a great deale goe beyond vs, such as were MOSES, ELIAS, DANIEL, &c.

Mat. When wee speake of the difference betweene the Church of the Israelites and ours, wee must not alledge some speciall gifts granted to some speciall men, but it must bee considered, what was the whole body of that Church, for therein standeth the difference.

Theoph. Declare the third difference.

Mat. It is herein, that euerlasting life was obscurely and darkely offered to the Israelites, wrapped or folded vp in earthly promises. For they were children, as PAVL speaketh, whose age farre more esteemeth some small things, than those that be of the best value. But now after wee be come to age, and are taught the Gospell, by meanes whereof the benefite of eternall life is much more plainely made knowen vnto vs, wee are in the very right way, led to the hope and meditation of it, neither doe wee stay in these earthly and fraile things. And this was the cause why the Fathers vnder the Law esteemed this life more than wee ought to esteeme it.

Theoph. Now remaineth the last difference.

Mat. It is that, whereof by the way we made mention: namely, that the Church vnder the Law, was as it were bounded with the borders of Iudea, or shut vp within that countrey. But now it is scattered throughout the whole world, neither is it tied to any place.

For this cause, Christ when he sent forth his Disciples to preach the Gospel before his death, in plaine words forbad them to go to the Gentiles, but to the lost sheepe of the house of Israel. But after his resurrection, when he had put an end to the ceremonies of the Law, hee biddeth his Apostles, going into all the world, to preach the Gospell to euery creature.

Math. 10. 5.

Mark. 16. 16.

Beholde what the differences be betweene the olde and our Church. Now these haue beene the causes, that the bookes of the Bible, which respect the state of the Church before Christ was borne, had the name of the old Testament; and those which were written after his resurrection, are called the new Testament, or the new Couenant; yet not that there be two couenants, or two Testaments betwixt God and his Church: for there is onely one which is diuersly considered.

Theoph. Let vs goe forward to the rest. What is the reason why we say; I beleeue the Church, and not, I see the Church?

Mat. Although particular Churches be seene of vs, yet because here is intreated of the Vniuersall Church, which

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we cannot behold with the eies of the body, therefore wee doe not say, I see, but I beleeue the Church. I adde moreouer, that the Church properly is no other but that company of the elect. For the hypocrites and reprobates which are mingled with the particular Church, are not members of the vniuersall Church. I doe adde furthermore, for a larger declaration hereof, these two arguments: First,

1. That it falleth out not seldome, that by the persecutions of the enemies, the Church is so scattered, that it seemeth almost to bee cleane put out. Howbeit it is not so, but onely for a time it is remooued from our sight, euen as the wheat lieth hidden vnder the chaffe. Which indeed came to passe in the daies of ELIAS: for the Prophet complained that he alone was left. For he thought that all the people were fallen away from true Religion. Notwithstanding the Lord answered: There bee remaining vnto me seuen thousand, which haue not bowed their knee before BAAL. Therfore when the Church is hidden either in the whole or in the parts, yet ought wee not thereupon to cease to beleeue that it is. For the Lord said by the Prophet, that Israels seed should not faile, as long as the Sun and Moone should bee in the heauens. The same thing doth Christ confirme, when he saith, that it shall neuer be, that the gates of hell shall ouercome the Church, that is to say, that neither the Diuell nor his Angels shall euer be able, to bring to passe the small or vtter destruction of the Church, howsoeuer God sometimes so giue them the bridle, that is to say, such libertie, that they bring vpon it great calamitie. The Church therefore may most fitly be cõpared to that bush, which MOSES heretofore saw in the wilderneſse, which burnt in the fire, & was not consumed.

1. King. 19. 12.

Ier. 31. 36.

Math. 16. 18.

Exod. 3. 2.

Theoph. How doth the speech of the gates of hell, whereof Christ maketh mention, agree with the practises, deceits, and counsels of the Diuell?

Mat. It is a similitude or likenesse taken from commonwealths, in the which in former times iudgement was vsed at the gates of their cities, where also the store of Armour and munition for wars was kept. Heereupon it grew, that commonly in auncient times the gates were taken for strength and counsell.

Gen. 24. 40.

Iud. 5. 8.

Theoph. Bring foorth the other argument, by the which thou maiſt prooue, that the Catholike Church is to be beleeued.

Mat. It is drawen from this: that although in it there haue alwaies beene many elect (ſeeing the word of God is neuer preached in vaine) yet neuertheleſſe all they tha, ioine themſelues to particular Churches, doe not ſtraightway belong to the vniuerſall Church: that is to ſay, are not by and by of the number of the faithfull and choſen. For as (ſaith AVSTIN) there bee many ſheepe without the ſheepfold of Chriſt, which God in his time will call; ſo there be many wolues in the very Church, whoſe hypocriſie the Lord in their time will diſcouer. Therefore to vſe the words of the Apoſtle) God only knoweth who bee his. And this is the cauſe, why making mention of the inuiſible Church, I comprehend vnder it the elect of God ſtill liuig in the earth.

Hom. 45. vpon Iohn.

2. Tim. 2.

Theoph. But are the elect themſelues, being called of God, and ioined to the particular Churches, vncertaine of their ſaluation?

Mat. No not ſo. For each of them may know their own faith, by a diſcerning thereof put into them by the Holy Ghoſt; but anothers faith they cannot. The word of beleeuing containeth all theſe things. For it is as if thou ſaiedſt, I beleeue that there is a certaine company of the faithfull and elect in the Church, which God defendeth in this world, of whoſe number I certainely know that I am. In the mean time Chriſtian charity requireth this, that we iudge well of all thoſe that haue ioined themſelues to particular Churches, ſo long as they ſhew themſelues tractable, and doe obey admonitions.

Theoph. It commeth to my remembrance, that the article of the Church is ſet after the article of the holy Ghoſt, becauſe the holy Ghoſt beareth witneſſe within vs, that we be members of it.

Mat. Not onely for this cauſe, but eſpecially becauſe it is gathered together by the diuine working of it by the which indeede wee are knit together into one bodie with Chriſt, and are partakers of all his gifts: that is to ſay, the merit of his death is communicated vnto vs, by the which

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we obtaine forgiuenesse of sinnes; the force also of his resurrection is imparted to vs, whereby we shall rise againe glorified in that last day, and shall liue eternally with him. All which things are in the Creed in exact order set down presently after the article of the Church.

Theoph. Hitherto we haue spoken sufficiently of the true Church: and so wee haue dispatched the first point that I propounded. Let vs therefore come to the other. What is the reason that thou saidst, we were no lesse ioyned by the holy Ghost with the Church, than with Christ? Of the communion of Saints.

Mat. Because it cannot ioyne the faithfull with Christ, but it doth also ioyne them together among themselues, euen as the members cannot be ioyned with the head, but they be also vnited together into the body. Now this is a most fit similitude, and best agreeth to the vnion which we haue with Christ. For as the head, if it be ioyned with the members, guideth them, nourisheth them, and giueth them life and motion; euen so Christ performeth all these things to his Church, with the which hee is made one by the working of the holy Ghost. For this cause is this sentence so often repeated of the Apostle; Christ is the head of the body of the Church. The faithfull are the body of Christ, and members for their part. Therefore Christ himselfe giueth his own name to the Church, as when he reproued PAVL; SAVL, SAVL, why persecutest thou mee? and this he doth because the head and members be one. Col. 1 18. 1. Cor. 12. 27. Act. 9. 4.

A short exposition of the Apostles Creed.

Theoph. Thou hast made mee to vnderstand all the articles of the Apostles Creede: Neuertheless, to the end the things which thou hast said may sticke the faster in my minde, I desire that the summe of the same articles may be againe laid forth in some short Paraphrase, or exposition, as also to be taught how the faithfull may apply them to themselues.

Mat. Thou desirest a thing (except I bee deceiued) not vnprofitable. Therefore euery one may comprehend the sum of the Creed, and apply it to himselfe, in these words; I put my whole trust in God the Father, as in him which will blesse mee. For I doubt not, seeing he is the Father of I beleeue in God the Father.

Iesus Christ, but he is also my Father, and therefore loueth me perfectly and infinitely, euen as he himselfe is perfect and infinite.

Almighty maker of heauen and earth,

Now, that will of his cannot be hindred by impotency or weakneſſe, as that of our earthly parents is wont to be. For he is omnipotent, and hath all creatures, as well thoſe that be in heauen, as thoſe that be in earth, in his hand to do me good, to keepe me ſafe from all ſinnes, and to helpe me in all my neceſſities, ſo farre forth as he himſelfe ſhall know to be expedient for me: who alſo doth ſo keepe in, beidle, and hold backe the diuell, and al mine enemies, that they cannot by any meanes hurt me.

And in Ieſus Chriſt his only Sonne our Lord.

I doe alſo put my whole truſt in Chriſt Ieſus our Lord, the onely Sonne of God, of the ſame eſſence with the Father and the holy Ghoſt, who came downe into the earth that hee might lift mee vp into heauen, which was made man, to the end he might haue the ſame God with me, and I might haue the ſame Father with him. For theſe bee his words, I aſcend or goe vp to my Father, and your Father, and my God and your God.

Iohn 20 17.

Which was conceiued by the holy Ghoſt, borne of the Virgin Mary, ſuffered vnder Pontius Pilate.

Who alſo, that hee might reconcile me to God the Father, was conceiued by the holy Ghoſt, and borne of the Virgin MARY. Moreouer, vnder PONTIVS PILATE he ſuffered all the reproches which I had deſerued. For hee was bound as a guilty perſon, that I might be looſed out of the chaine of the diuell and ſinne. Hee was condemned of an earthly iudge, notwithſtanding hee were moſt iuſt and innocent, that I which am guilty of innumerable tranſgreſſions, might bee diſcharged before the tribunall ſeate of the heauenly Iudge.

Who in ſcorne was cloathed in purple, and crowned with a crowne of thornes, that he might make mee partaker of his glorious crowne, and kingly dignity.

Crucified dead and buried.

Who was nailed to the croſſe, dead and buried, that he might deliuer me from the curſe of death, and ſlauerie of ſinne, and the tyranny of the diuell.

He deſcended into Hell.

Who for me deſcended into hell, while as he in the verie time of that paſſion, ſuffered both in ſoule and body, the fearefull torments of the wrath of God, which I had deſerued, and wherewith I ſhould for euer haue been ouerwhelmed

whelmed in hell: who also the third day rose againe from the dead, that for my sake death being fully ouercome, hee might giue me life. The third day he rose again from the dead.

Who finally ascended into heauen, from whence I was banished for my sins, that he might set open a passage for me into it, and might in my name take possession of the heauenly kingdome. He ascended into Heauen.

But now he sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty, and there continually maketh intercession for me with his Father, and offereth for mee the merit of his death, that so he may become mercifull vnto me. Sitteth at the right hand of God the Father almighty

I beleeue also that at the last day hee shall come visibly downe from the heauens to iudge both quicke and dead. Neither is there any cause why I should feare or be afraide of condemnation, seeing I shall stand at the iudgement seate of that Iudge, which is also my patron and aduocate. I do therefore assuredly know, that hee will giue sentence on my side and absolue me, that I may be partaker of his glory. From thence shall he come to iudge the quicke and dead.

I doe also put my whole trust in the holy Ghost, which is God of the same essence with the Father and the Sonne, who also hath ioyned me with Christ, and sanctified mee in him. I beleeue in the holy Ghost.

Which beareth witnesse with my spirit, that I am the child of God.

Which maketh request for mee with sighes that cannot be expressed.

Which comforteth me in aduersitie.

Which kindleth a desire in vs to leade our liues in the obedience of God, strengtheneth vs, & finally giueth vs the gift of perseuerance to the end. Confirmeth and strengtheneth me against all temptations. If at any time I fall, he raiseth me vp by true repentance, and assureth me of assistance with his power, euen vnto death.

I beleeue the Catholike Church, gathered together by the power of the holy Ghost, that is to say, the company of the faithfull chosen of God, which are scattered thorowout the whole world, of whose number I doe certainely know my selfe to be one The holy Catholike Church.

I beleeue that all wee which are faithfull, are so vnited The communion of saints.

and

and ioyned with Christ our head, that wee are made partakers of his gifts, that is, of the merit of his death and the power of his resurrection.

The remission of sinnes. Resurrection of the body. The life euerlasting.

Whereupon I am assured of the full forgiuenesse of my sinnes, and of my glorious resurrection in the last day, (which the partaking of eternall life shall follow) together with all the faithfull and elect, with whom hee shall for euer be praised of me in the heauens.

Theoph. I haue verily heard of thee an excellent Paraphrase or short exposition of the Apostles creed, and such a one as doth not a little serue for edification. But that thou maiest prouide for, and helpe the memory of the vnlearned, draw all this into a short summe as thou canst.

The summe of the Creed.

Mat. It cannot be made shorter, than if thou say: I put the whole hope of my saluation in one Iesus Christ crucified, who being giuen vnto me by the mercy of the Father, communicateth himselfe vnto me by the power of the holy Ghost, to make me partaker of the merit of his death. and also of eternall life. Now this agreeth with that which the Apostle saith: I esteemed not to know any thing among you, but Iesus Christ, and him crucified.

1 Cor. 2. 2.

Theoph. I am fully satisfied with this exposition of the Apostles Creed, and it containeth many things, which bring no small comfort to the hearers. And I beseech our good and heauenly Father, to engraue them in our hearts by the working of the holy Ghost, that so wee may earnestly acknowledge & stedfastly beleeue that immeasurable loue wherewith he loueth vs in Christ Iesus, by whom he hath redeemed vs from euerlasting death, and hath taken vs for his children, that at length we may be heires of his kingdome.

Mat. But now night draweth on, wherefore I would aduise, that we deferre the rest, till to morrow: Farewell THEOPHILVS.

Theoph. Fare you well also MATHEVV.

The end of the first Booke.

The Second Booke Of *Christian Religion.*

Wherein the testimonies of our *saluation are declared.*

CHAP. I.

Of good works, by the which the faith that is hidden in our hearts is manifested, that it may be seen & known.

THEOPHILVS.

GOd saue thee most dearely beloued MATTHEVV.

Mat. God saue thee also most louing THEOPHILVS: Hast thou thought vpon the things, which we handled yesterday?

Theoph. Yea indeede most diligently, insomuch as they occupied my mind in my sleepe: whereof to make proofe, if it be not troublesom to thee, I will comprehend them in a short sum, which shall be as an entrance for vs to the rest.

Mat. Thou shalt doome a very great pleasure.

Theoph. The summe of our speech yesterday may be referred to foure heads:

1. The first whereof, is of God, distinct in three persons. Who also by his prouidence gouerneth all things, is most perfectly iust, and most perfectly mercifull.

2. The second is of man, who being by his owne nature a most wretched sinner, is guilty of eternall death before the iudgment seate of God.

3. The third is of Christ Iesus, whose death is a most present remedy for our saluation.

4. The fourth is of faith, whereby that remedie is applied to vs for our saluation.

Now vnlesse I bee deceiued, order requireth, that wee speake of good workes, which doe necessarily cleaue vnto faith, and be effects of it. Moreouer, seeing in the first two chapters of the former Booke, it hath beene declared what manner one God is, and in the third and fourth Chapters what a one he sheweth himselfe toward vs; this one thing seemeth now to remaine, that wee vnderstand, how wee should

ſhould carrie our ſelues towards him, that is to ſay, what workes are to be done of vs, that we may obey him, and be acceptable to his Maieſtie.

Mat. Thou haſt very well deliuered the ſumme of our yeſterdaies talke: I doe alſo allow the order propounded by thee concerning good workes.

This one thing remaineth, that you mooue your queſtions of them in ſome eaſie method, to the end that this place which of it ſelfe is ſomewhat intricate and doubtfull, may be plainly and clearely handled of vs.

Theoph. I haue no eaſier method, than that which ſometimes I learned of thee, namely, that all this diſcourſe bee brought vnto three heads.

1. Firſt, what bee thoſe good workes, to be done of vs, that we may pleaſe God.

2. How we may performe thoſe workes.

3. And thirdly, to what end wee muſt doe them, and what is the vſe of them.

But in the former Booke, when wee ſpake of regeneration, wee did ſufficiently diſcuſſe this ſecond point. For we taught that man of himſelfe could doe no good thing, and that God by his ſpirit, wrought in vs both to wil and to be able to doe. Wee are therefore to examine the other two points which are behinde, which will cauſe vs to diuide this chapter into two parts, if it ſo ſeeme good vnto you.

The firſt part of this Chapter ſheweth what good workes we ought to doe.

Theoph. Let vs therefore come to the firſt part: namely, what good works are to be done that we may obey God.

Mat. Before wee goe any further, wee are to call vpon God, without whoſe guidance we cannot thinke of, much leſſe performe, any good thing. I doe therfore beſeech our good God and heauenly father, to giue vs the ſpirit of wiſdome and vnderſtanding, that the things which wee ſhall ſpeake of good works, may agree with the truth, ſo as they may tend to his glory, and the building of his Church. Now, THEOPHILVS, doe I anſwer to thy queſtion; That we muſt doe thoſe good workes to obey God, which himſelfe hath commanded in his owne Law.

Theoph.

Theoph. Why so?

Mat. For hee hath plainly forbidden to adde any thing to it, or to take ought from it, and hath commanded that no man should turne aside from it, either to the right hand or to the left. Deut.4.2. Deut.5.32.

Theoph. What if men be so rash that they dare doe it?

Mat. The Lord will not accept their fooliſh deuices for good workes, but will demand of them, that which in former times he demanded of the Iſraelites: Who required theſe things at your hands? Eſa.1.11.

Theoph. I confeſſe it to be a moſt iuſt and righteous thing that the worſhip of God ſhould be according to his owne preſcript, and not after the inuention of men: foraſmuch as we alſo which are created of him, do require this of our ſeruants, that they ſerue vs according to our direction.

Mat. Right: for otherwiſe wee might thinke our ſelues not the maſters, but the ſeruants of our ſeruants. Should it therefore be righteous and iuſt, that God which is our Creator and Lord, ſhould allow that in vs, which wee our ſelues condemne in our ſeruants as a thing vnrighteous and vniuſt?

Theo. Seeing they only be good works which God hath commanded in his law; let vs ſee what the law of God is.

Mat. It is that which himſelfe deliuered to his people by the hand of MOSES, which alſo with his owne finger hee wrot in two Tables of ſtone, forty daies after the deliuerance of the people out of their bondage in Ægypt, which is alſo commonly called the morall law; beginning thus, Heare Iſrael, I am the Lord thy God. The Morall Law. Exod.20.2. Deut.5.6.

Theoph. Why is it called Morall?

Mat. Becauſe it intreateth of manners, as it appeareth by the etymology or true interpretation of the word. For it ſheweth vs the vertues to be followed, to obey God, as alſo the vices to be auoided, leſt we incurre his diſpleaſure. But it is alſo called Morall, to put a difference betweene the Ceremoniall, which comprehendeth the ceremonies preſcribed of God in the old Church, as alſo betweene the Iudiciall or Politicall law, which containeth iudgements, and the penalties to bee inflicted vpon ſuch as breake this Morall Law. The Morall Law diſtinct from Ceremoniall and Iudiciall.

Theoph.

Theoph. Is not this morall law, the ſame doctrine whereof the Philoſophers wrot ſo many bookes, and which they called Morall Philoſophy?

Mat. Yes verily. For it is nothing elſe; but the Law of nature, which God hath ingrauen in the hearts of men; which alſo, becauſe by little & little it wore out (for it was greatly darkened by ſinne) hee did as it were renew by the proclaiming and writing of it. Therefore concerning the Philoſophers, they onely attained vnto, and taught the ſhadow of that, the body whereof, & the very truth it ſelfe, is moſt briefely purtraied or painted in this law; and is after beautifully ſet out in the proper colours in the writings of the Prophets and Apoſtles. For the Prophets and Apoſtles, ſo often as they intreate of vertues and vices, bee the true interpreters of the Law.

The Morall law grauen in the minds of men as it were renued by Moſes, and expounded in many places of Scripture.

Theoph. Wherefore ſaieſt thou that the Prophets and Apoſtles, when they ſpeake of vertues and vices, be the true interpreters of this Law?

Mat. Foraſmuch as the Lord forbad to adde any thing to the Law, or take ought from it, it followeth neceſſarily, that it is moſt perfect, and that therefore whatſoeuer the Scripture in any place doth command or forbid vs, ought of neceſſity to be referred vnto the law, and be accounted an expoſition of it. And indeede by this meanes he would take away all excuſe from the tranſgreſſors of the Law.

Theoph. How?

Mat. Firſt, that no man ſhould pretend the largeneſſe of it as an excuſe, why he had not learned it by heart; the Lord would haue it brought into ſo many precepts, as wee haue fingers vpon our hands. Whereupon, more than once it is called of Moses: Ten words.

The morall law compriſed in very few words.

Afterward, leaſt any by the ſhortneſſe ſhould ſeeke to excuſe himſelfe, that hee could not come to the vnderſtanding of it, the Lord would expound and declare his owne minde more at large by his Prophets and Apoſtles.

More largely declared.

The expoſition of the Morall Law.

Theoph. Wee are therefore to examine this Morall Law. How many parts be there of it?

Mat. The Lord himſelfe is the diuider of it, and hath diuided

diuided it into two Tables. In the former whereof, beeing perfected in foure commandements, hee would eſtabliſh true religion: for, it teacheth all the worſhip which hee requireth of vs. But in the latter, in ſixe commandements he hath taught, that loue, friendſhip, and fellowſhip, ought to be kept among men: for in it hee hath commanded all thoſe things which ſerue to maintaine peace and agreement amongſt vs. Briefly, the firſt Table commandeth all thoſe duties which man oweth vnto God: and the latter, al that man oweth to man, according to the will of God. For the commandements of the latter Table are to be referred to the former, that is to ſay, they ought to be kept, not indeed for our neighbours ſake, but for Gods ſake, who hath commanded them.

Two Tables.

The ſumme of the Morall Law.

The firſt Table of the Law.

Theop. Now we muſt come to the expoſition of the foure Commandements of the firſt Table. I doe therefore demand of thee, what order thou thinkeſt meete to be kept, that the whole matter may be made the plainer?

Mat. 1. My aduice is, that in the firſt place we expound the Preface ſet before the law.

The order of the firſt Table.

2. Secondly, I will deliuer ſome generall rules of ſpeciall good vſe, to giue light to euery commandement.

3. Which things beeing ſet downe, theſe foure commandements of the firſt Table ſhall generally be expounded, and withall we will obſerue, how well they agree one with the other. And at length we will come to the expoſition of each commandement by it ſelfe.

The Preface of the Law.

Heare O Iſrael, I am the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the houſe of bondage.

Theoph. I will follow the order which thou aduiſeſt, and will begin at the Preface of the Law. What then is the meaning of it?

Mat. Firſt, the Lord would haue vs attend to the hearing of the Law, when he ſaith: Heare Iſrael.

2. He doth alſo challenge to himſelfe power, and the right of authority in theſe words; I am the Lord: wherein he

he sheweth, that we owe him obedience as vnto our Lord.

3 But because he requireth of vs, not a constrained but a voluntary and willing obedience, he allureth vs vnto it, by a rehearsal of his loue towards vs, & that is propounded in these words, THY GOD, that is to say, which doth embrace thee with good will and fauour.

Finally, he bringeth foorth a notable testimony of that loue, when he saith; Which brought thee out of the Land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. In which words he declareth the selfe same thing, as if hee should say; I haue deliuered you from the tyranny of the Diuell and sinne, that I might bring you to eternall life. For that temporall benefit in times past bestowed vpon the people of Israel, was a type or figure of the spirituall deliuerance of the Church.

Theoph. But the Lord seemeth not to speake to vs in these words, Heare Israel, but onely to the Israelites that came of ABRAHAM and, IACOB, to whome the name of ISRAEL was giuen by the Angell.

Gal. 3 7. *Mat.* The Apostle witnesseth, that all they that bee of faith, are the children of ABRAHAM. And therefore in the name of ISRAEL, all the faithfull are spoken vnto: and yet not that the vnfaithfull & vnbeleeuers are exempted from keeping of the Law; but because they haue not eares to heare, much lesse an heart to vnderstand, therefore the Lord speaketh not vnto them.

Theoph. I haue attained the sence and meaning of this Preface. Now declare those generall rules, which thou saidst gaue light to the vnderstanding of the Law.

Mat. They be three. The first whereof is this, that when God commandeth good, he doth not onely forbid the euill that is contrary vnto it, which also is done in the lawes of men; but when he forbiddeth euill, he commandeth the good that is contrary vnto it: and this is peculiar or proper to the law of God. For example. When God forbiddeth vs to take his name in vaine, he doth on the contrary side command that wee hallow and honour it. When hee forbiddeth, that any man steale, he commandeth vs to giue our selues vnto charity. And so of the rest of the commandements.

Theoph.

Theoph. Why are almost all the commandements deliuered rather negatiuely than affirmatiuely, that is to say, so as they rather forbid euill, than command that which is good?

Mar. Indeed that is well marked of you: for onely two, namely the last of the first Table, wherein the obseruation of the Sabbath day, and the first of the second Table, wherein the honour of parents be commanded, bee propounded affirmatiuely, all the rest negatiuely, and so forbid euill. But this was done that we might vnderstand, that no man can giue his minde to that which is good, before he haue laid aside the euill that is contrary to it. Euen as we see that thornes must bee first pulled vp, before good seede be sowen. Therefore the Prophet calling the Israelites to repentance saith; Plough vp your fallow ground, and sow not among thornes. Moreouer, euery where in the holy Scriptures is this order kept, that it first forbiddeth euill, before it command good: as where the Prophets say: Cease to doe euill, learne to doe well; Decline from euill, and doe that which is good. Ier 4.3. Esa.1.16. Ptal 34.15.

Theoph. Let vs come to the second rule.

Mar. The Lord minding to forbid diuers euils of the same kinde, hee comprehended them in the name of the greatest, and as it were the chiefest, to the end wee might know, that the sins which seeme to be most small by the iudgement of men, are accounted with God of the same nature with that vnder the which they be forbidden: As for example. When God would forbid murthers, reuenges, iniuries, and priuie hatreds, he comprehended them all vnder the word MVRTHER, to teach vs, that he which hateth his brother, is a murtherer, as IOHN saith. The same is to be said of him, which looketh vpon a woman to lust after her; for Christ affirmeth that such a one hath committed adultery in his heart. 1 Ioh 3.15. Math. 5.18.

Theoph. The third rule is behind.

Mar. When any vice is forbidden, not onely they bee forbidden that be of the same kind, but also all the degrees by the which men come vnto them, yea & all such things, which by any meanes may minister occasion of our falling into such vices. On the contrary side, when vertue is commanded,

minded, all those things also bee commanded; that may draw vs on forward to it.

Theoph. Hauing now deliuered those generall rules, wee are to consider the coherence or agreement of the foure commandements of the first Table, according to the order which you did prescribe.

How the foure commandements of the first Table agree together.

Mat. I did therefore set downe this order, because it will bring greater light to each commandement. Thou hast heard already, that in the first Table, God hath commanded the worship due vnto him. Seeing therefore we ought to worship him no lesse in our bodies, than in our soules, as he that is a Creator of both;

In the first commandement, he setteth out the dutie of our soule: for he sheweth what inward knowledge hee requireth of vs.

In the second, he reformeth the disposition and behauiour of our bodies, in the things which appertaine to his worship. And together condemneth idolatry, wherein men doe chiefly sinne against this commandement.

In the third, hee restraineth our speech; for by it wee ought also to declare that inward worship.

In the fourth he appointeth a certaine day of the weeke wherin those things may be called to practise, as well those before mentioned, as those also which be commanded in the latter Table; and this indeed is the cause, why it is placed betweene both the Tables.

The first Commandement.

Thou shalt haue none other Gods before my face.

Theoph. Let vs at length come to the speciall exposition of the first commandement. What the meaning of it is, it is sufficiently vnderstood by that which hath bin said. Let vs therefore see what be the parts of it, then let vs follow each of them in their order.

Mat. Seeing this commandement is deliuered Negatiuely, by our first rule it containeth the Affirmatiue vnder it. Therefore it is to be diuided into two parts.

1. In the first, which is not expressed, hee will haue vs to acknowledge him for our God.

2. In the latter, which is indeed expressed, hee forbid-

deth

deth that we acknowledge any other for our God, beside himselfe.

Theo. Of how many parts standeth that acknowledgement which God requireth?

Mat. Vpon foure: namely,

1. Adoration, or worship,
2. Trust.
3. Inuocation, or praier.
4. And thanksgiuing.

Now this acknowledgement proceedeth from knowledge: for he cannot be acknowledged, except he bee first knowne.

Theoph. Shew this vnto me in these seuerall parts.

Mat. First, we cannot worship him (now, he is worshiped when euery one of vs submitteth himselfe to his greatnesse) vnlesse wee also acknowledge him our Creator and Lord. We cannot put our trust in him, but wee must confesse him to be omnipotent & perfectly good, that he may helpe our necessities. We will neuer thinke vpon praying and giuing thanks vnto him, except wee be well assured, that he is the fountaine and well-spring of all good things.

Theoph. Are these foure vertues onely included in the first commandement?

Mat. If thou respect the substance, these onely: Howbeit many other spring from them. For true adoration or worship, hath alwaies piety adioyned with it, that is to say, a childe-like feare, and willing obedience towards him.

Out of trust, ariseth

1. Hope, that is, a certaine looking for the fruition of the heauenly promises.
2. Patience in aduersitie.
3. Perseuerance, or continuance in his seruice.
4. A holy securitie, so long as we keepe our selues within the bounds of our callings.

From praier and thanksgiuing springeth true humilitie of heart. For by them we be admonished, that we are emptie of all kinde of good things, vntill God bestow them vpon vs, and that if there be any good thing in vs, it is of God. That humility also bringeth forth modestie, which causeth vs not to desire a higher place, but to bee content

with the condition whereunto God hath called vs.

Theoph. Forasmuch as wee haue reckoned vp the vertues contained in this commandement, now we must oppose or set against them, the vices whereunto they be contrary.

Mat. These are,

1. Rebellion against God.
2. Doubting of his promises.
3. Desperation.
4. Impatience in aduersitie.
5. Inconstancy in the worship of God, and in our owne vocation.
6. Falling away from the truth of the Gospell.
7. Pride.
8. Disdaine.
9. Ambition.
10. Faint-heartednesse in good things; and finally rashnesse, which aduentureth vpon vnnecessary dangers, vnder a colour of Gods prouidence.

The latter part of the first commandement.

Theoph. Let vs come to the other part of this commandement. Now in it is forbidden, that we acknowledge any other but the true God. How doe we fall into this sinne?

Mat. When we giue vnto creatures those foure points, or any of them: for then we make them our gods, when we ascribe the things vnto them, which appertaine to one God. Therefore in this commandement the Lord saith not; Thou shalt acknowledge me for thy God, but, Thou shalt haue no other gods before mee: but in these words he compriseth three things:

First, that we ought to haue one God.

Secondly, that himselfe is he, whom we are to acknowledge for our God, euen as it is plainly expressed by him in the Preface, in these words, I am the Lord thy God.

Thirdly, that it is not sufficient if we acknowledge him for our God; except we acknowledge him alone, so as wee ioyne no other gods as it were fellowes vnto him, which they doe especially, that pray vnto Saints, and put their trust in them, whatsoeuer they may pretend, or howsoeuer they may seeke to shift the matter.

Theo. Is it not also forbidden, that we should in any case put our trust in the liuing? as for example, in our kinsfolks and

and friends, to craue their helpe if need be, or to giue them thankes for the benefits which we haue receiued?

Mat. No, not so, so as wee acknowledge them onely as instruments, by which God will helpe vs, and that they haue their will and abilitie to do vs good from God: for then we put not our trust in the creature, but in the Creator himselfe, in whom only we confesse is power to helpe vs: without whom men can haue no helpe at all for vs. Notwithstanding it is meete, that we do giue them thanks, so often as wee receiue any benefit from them, so long as we remember that the chiefe thanks are to be referred vnto God the true giuer of all gifts.

Theoph. What if we put our trust in creatures more than in the Creator?

Mat. Then be they our gods: therefore PAVL speaking of couetousnesse, calleth it idolatrie: by which words he meaneth, that couetous men make their riches their gods, because they trust in them more than in God himselfe. Which indeede is not onely true in that, but also as oft as wee preferre any other creature before the Creator, whether wee feare, loue, or obey it more; for then wee make it our God. Therefore PAVL speaking of such, who, that they may liue daintily and securely, cast off the seruice of God, saith; Their God is their belly. Col. 3. 5. Phil. 3. 19.

Theoph. I thinke that to be the meaning of Christ, when he saith; Call no man your father on the earth, for one is your father which is in heauen. Mat. 23. 9.

Mat. It is so indeed; for in those words he doth not only warne vs to acknowledge God for the chiefe father, but especially to loue, feare, and worship him farre aboue our earthly parents, and al other that be set ouer vs.

Theoph. Now do I vnderstand in what maner we should seeke for helpe at the hands of men, & trust in them without diminishing the honour of God. But what letteth vs that we may not doe the same towards the Saints who are already receiued into heauen, that is to say, cal vpon them, and in some sort put our trust in them, vpon condition, that wee take them as instruments appointed of God for our helpe?

Mat. God verily giueth this abilitie to those that bee a-

liue, yea he hath commanded that one ſhould helpe another: but this cannot bee in the dead: for SALOMON ſaith, Eccleſ.9.6. Alſo their loue, and their hatred, and their enuie is now periſhed, and they haue no more portion for euer, in all that is done vnder the Sunne.

Theoph. How knoweſt thou, that God hath not giuen this power to the dead, to be able to helpe vs, and that therefore we ought not to pray vnto them, when any neceſſity preſſeth vs?

Mat. There is no one example of this in all the Scripture, which notwithſtanding is the moſt certaine rule of truth. Moreouer, it teacheth vs, that God onely knoweth Ier.17.10. Pſal.7.10. the things that be abſent, and vnderſtandeth the heart of man, ſo as hee heareth and fauourably heareth our praiers and complaints, and helpeth vs.

Wherefore no man can call vpon the dead, or can any way truſt in them, but he taketh away the honour due vnto God, which he giueth vnto them, and therefore maketh them his God.

Theoph. If it will bee none otherwiſe, the things which haue beene ſpoken of the dead, ſeeme not to appertaine vnto the Angels, ſpecially ſeeing that it is manifeſt by the teſtimony of the ſcripture, that God oftentimes vſeth their Pſal.91.11. Heb.1.14. ſeruice to helpe vs, and that they bee conuerſant amongſt vs, ſo as they may heare our praiers.

Therefore it ſhall be no hurt, if wee call vpon them to helpe vs, as we doe vpon the liuing, yet with this condition, that wee take them only for his inſtruments appointed by himſelfe.

Mat. Thou gathereſt ill, for they cannot helpe vs, ſaue in thoſe things which God hath expreſſely commanded them, which indeede bee vnknowne vnto vs. But foraſmuch as they do moſt readily performe the things they be commanded, it is not neceſſarie to call vpom them, although we our ſelues knew thoſe things. Howbeit it is altogether neceſſarie to ſpeake to the liuing here vpon the earth, becauſe for the moſt part they ſcarce yeeld any helpe except they bee ſo called vpon that it trouble them. But whereas thou ſaidſt, that the Angels be amongſt vs, doe vnderſtand what we need, & heare our praiers, it is indeed

true

true. Neuertheleſſe they cannot be euery where, nor know all things: for that is proper to God only: which is a cauſe that we ought not to pray vnto them. But although all the things which we haue alleadged were of no force; there is no commandement of it in all the Scripture, nor any example whereby we may be enformed, that worſhipping of Angels is pleaſing to God. And PAVL affirmeth, that whatſoeuer is done without faith, is ſinne. Rom. 14. 23.

Theoph. Now the expoſition of this commandement wanteth this one thing, that thou ſhew why theſe words be added, In my ſight, or before me.

Mat. That he might more and more keepe vs from the tranſgreſſing of it, while he teacheth how great iniurie is done to his Maieſtie, when we dare commit ſo hainous an offence euen in his preſence. For, although impietie and vngodlines be hidden in the heart, yet it is manifeſt to the eies of the Lord, whereunto all things are naked and open, Heb. 4. 13. ſaith the Apoſtle. It is therefore as if an vnhoneſt woman ſhould prouoke and ſet on fire the minde of her husband, by bringing before his face the party with whome ſhe playeth the harlot, and by committing of the very act of vncleanneſſe in his preſence.

The ſecond Commandement.

Thou ſhalt not make to thy ſelfe any grauen image, nor the likeneſſe of the things that be in heauen aboue, nor of the things that be in the earth beneath; nor of the things that be in the waters vnder the earth. Thou ſhalt not bow downe to them nor worſhip them. For I the Lord thy God am a iealous God, viſiting the ſinnes of the fathers vpon the children, to the third and fourth generation of them that hate mee, and ſhewing mercy to thouſands of them that loue me, and keepe my commandements.

Theoph. Thou haſt ſatisfied me concerning the firſt commandement: let vs goe forward to the ſecond. How many parts hath it?

Mat. Three.

1. The firſt of the forbidding of the things wherein a man may ſinne in the outward worſhip due vnto God.

2. The ſecond is of things commanded, which are to be

performed in the profession of that worship, which is done by the outward behaviour of the body: and this precept is comprehended vnder the prohibition by the first generall rule.

3. The third containeth threatnings against the breakers of the Law, and setteth before vs a promise to such as keepe it.

Theoph. Let vs in the first place consider of that prohibition.

Mat. It is contained in these words: Thou shalt not make to thy selfe any grauen image, neither any likenesse of the things that be in heauen aboue, nor of the things that be in the earth beneath, nor of the things that bee in the waters vnder the earth. Thou shalt not bow downe to them nor worship them.

Theoph. Why, after the words, Thou shalt make thee no grauen image, is it presently added, Nor any likenesse?

Mat. It is, that we may know, that pictures painted, or any other kinde of images, be forbidden of God, no lesse than grauen images, which are by name mentioned.

Theoph. What vnderstandest thou by the things that are in heauen?

Mat. The sunne, moone, starres, birds: and vnder the things that be vpon the earth are comprehended, men, bruite beasts, plants, trees: and finally by those that be in the waters, fishes. Moreouer the waters that is the sea, are said to be vnder the earth, in respect of men that do inhabit it: for otherwise the sea together with the earth, make a globe, whereof there is not one part higher or lower than another.

Theo. Why should God thus recken vp all his creatures?

Mat. Because there was no kinde of them, which the heathen did not at that time abuse to idolatry: which custome the Iewes themselues followed, notwithstanding this prohibition giuen them. Ezec. 8. 2 3. &c.

Theoph. But in this place there is no mention of spirituall and heauenly things, whereof neuertheless there is very often abuse among the heathen to idolatry.

Mat. True. But heere is no mention of them, because they cannot be represented, but by borrowing the forme or shape of the visible things, which in this place are reckoned

kened vp. Therefore vnder the visible, the inuisible also are comprehended.

Theoph. But are all kindes of pictures and images forbidden of God?

Mat. They are vtterly condemned, if they be made to represent his Maiesty; for that is directly forbidden by him. Deut. 4.15. Acter 17.28.

Theoph. Why so?

Mat. Because it cannot be done but to the contempt of his diuine Maiesty, forasmuch as he which is eternall, infinite, without body, and inuisible, is represented in the likenesse of a fraile and transitory creature, finite, hauing a body, & being visible. For this cause ESAY going about to reproue the madnesse of the idolaters of his time, that did set foorth God in a visible shape, describeth his wonderfull greatnes, howbeit in termes agreeable to our capacity, when he saith: Who hath measured the waters in the fist, and compassed heauen with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountaines in a weight, and the hills in a ballance? And a little after he addeth: To whom then will ye make God like, or what similitude will ye set vp vnto him? Esay 40.12. Esay 40.18.

Theoph. I grant that God is not to be set out in any visible shape: but why may it not bee lawfull so to represent things created?

Mat. It is lawfull: so long as it is not done to adore or worship them: which the Lord straight way addeth after the forbidding of making images, in these words: Thou shalt not bow downe to them, nor worship them.

Theoph. Thinkest thou that it is all one for a man to bow himselfe to idols, and to adore or worship them?

Mat. Yea verily. For adoration signifieth all religious worship: but no man boweth himselfe to idols, but with religious worship.

Theo. What vnderstandest thou by the name of worship?

Mat. That they be not apparelled and decked; that incense be not burnt to them, temples built, altars set vp, holidaies kept, and such like.

Theoph. Therefore it is lawfull to haue any images, so as it be not to adoration and worship, except those that be made to represent God.

Mat.

Mat. All religious images bee also to bee excepted, by the precept of our third rule, lest men abuse them to idolatry, being of their owne nature aboue measure prone to that wickednesse. Which thing gaue IOHN occasion that in the end of his Epistle, hee ioyned this admonition. Babes keepe your selues from idols, that is, from images made for religious vse.

1 Iohn 5.21.

Theoph. But they may teach the ignorant people, according to the common speech: Images are vnlearned mens bookes.

Mat. They be indeed the bookes of the vnlearned: For they can teach nothing but vanity and lying: as the Scripture testifieth: and therefore they old men in ignorance, and make them idiots and vnlearned; which experience it selfe proueth. But the most sure way whereby all the faithfull of what degree soeuer, may be taught, and that with profit, is that which the Lord himselfe hath appointed, that is, the preaching of his word, by the which PAVL saith, that Christ is painted befor our eies.

Gal. 3.1.

Theoph. Let vs go forward: Is there no euill forbidden in the commandement, besides the adoration and worshipping of Images?

Mat. Two other besides forbidden, namely

1. Worshipping of creatures; and
2. Superstition.

Theoph. What cause hast thou to say that these two euills be forbidden in this commandement?

Mat. Because they be of the same kinde with idolatrie: for they tend hereunto, to declare by the outward gesture of the body, the worship which they thinke they giue vnto God. Whereupon it is that these two bee called by the name of idolatry.

Theoph. Right. For both the worshippers of the creatures and superstitious persons, haue accustomedly beene called idolaters, as well as the worshippers of idols.

Mat. And verily they be ioyned together, by a most neer bond: for idolatry alwaies accompanieth the worshipping of creatures, and bringeth forth sundry superstitions.

Of the adoration of creatures.

Theoph. Let vs speake of these two euills: What vnderstandest thou by the adoration of creatures?

Mat.

Mar. The religious worship which is giuen vnto them.

Theoph. Why so?

Mar. Because adoration belongeth onely vnto God, whereof the Scripture it selfe is a plentifull witnesse. Whereupon it followeth, that we can bestow neuer so little of it, vpon any creature, whether it bee visible or inuisible, of what condition soeuer, but we doe take from and diminish the worship due to the Creator. Therefore the Angell said vnto IOHN, which had fallen downe at his feete to worship him; See thou doe it not, I am thy fellow seruant, one of thy brethren, worship God. Apo. 19. 10.

Theoph. But doest thou comprehend vnder that prohibition, the worship and reuerence which is vsually giuen to men that be aliue?

Mar. No verily, so long as it be only ciuill; for if there be neuer so litle affection mingled tending to religion, it is corrupt, and displeaseth God. For this cause PETER refused the reuerence which CORNELIVS did to him: for the holy Apostle perceiued, that the reuerence was not meerely ciuill, but had mixed with it some sauouring of Religion. Now if it be vnlawfull to worship Saints, yea the very Angels themselues, how much more vnlawfull is it to worship their images, reliques, the crosse of Christ, the likenesse of it, and such like? Act. 10. 26.

Theoph. Let vs come to superstition: what meanest thou by this word? Superstition

Mar. It is called Superstition, when any worshippeth God by rites or ceremonies deuised of me. Of this sort are

1. To weare a certaine kinde of apparell for Religion sake.
2. To hold difference of place in worshipping God.
3. To obserue daies and times for that purpose.
4. To make a difference of meats.
5. To abstaine from marriage: and such other inuentions of men, whereof PAVL thus speaketh; Which things haue indeede a shew of wisdome, in voluntarie religion, and humblenesse of minde, and in not sparing of the bodie; yet they are not any thing worth. Yea rather they are to the contempt of God, and hinder our saluation. Col. 2. 23.

Theoph. How are they to the contempt of God?

Mar.

Mat. Because he preferreth obedience before sacrifice, and will bee worshipped not after the inuentions of men, but according to his owne will, which hee hath therefore made known vnto vs. Therefore Christ said to the Scribes and Pharisies, They worship mee in vaine, teaching doctrines that bee the commandements of men. Moreouer, superstitions bring in the contempt of Gods commandements, & of that worship which he requireth of vs to performe vnto him, which experience doth plentifully proue.

Mat.15.9.

Theoph. But how do superstitions hinder our saluation?

Mat. Because superstitious persons imagine, that they merit somewhat by them; which imagination turneth men from Christ, and therfore from their owne saluation. For that cause PAVL calleth the forbidding of meats & of marriage, the doctrine of diuels. It is therefore a great deale better to goe on slowly in the waies of the Lord, than to runne apace in the waies of superstition; which whosoeuer hath entred into, the further he goeth forward the further he goeth from God, and therefore from eternall life.

1.Tim.4.

Theoph. Now I vnderstand what superstition is.

But, seeing there bee three euils by the which the worship of God is defiled, I demand why idolatrie onely is shortly touched in this commandement?

Mat. It is according to our second rule, namely, that God when he meaneth to forbid many sinnes of the same kinde, forbiddeth them all vnder the name of one, and that the greatest, such a one as idolatrie is.

Theoph. Why thinkest thou idolatrie to be a greater sin, than the worshipping of creatures, or superstition?

Mat. The reason in my iudgement is most plaine. For although a man be mad already, when he forsaketh God, for some excellent gifts wherwith any creature hath beene adorned of God, and worshippeth that creature: yet then he may be said to be sore vexed with madnes and outrage when he worshippeth an idol, made by the industrie of man. Therefore the Scripture describing that vanity, calleth idols the workes of mens hands, and presently after addeth: They haue a mouth and speake not; they haue eies and see not; they haue eares and heare not; they haue

Psal.115.4

noses

noſes and ſmell not; they haue hands and handle not; they haue feete and walke not; and finally that they be dead: In which words he ſignifieth, that men be altogether out of their wits, which worſhip the worke of mans hands, an image, dumbe, blinde, deafe, that vnderſtandeth nothing, and is voide of all the ſenſes, and therefore inferiour to his maker and worſhipper: which appeareth euen by this, that neither of them would be like their idol.

Theoph. But they that worſhip images, will not grant thee that thou ſaiſt, namely, that they worſhip the images, much leſſe take them for gods. For they ſay, they be not ſo voide of reaſon, but they know, they be either of wood, or ſtone, or of painting. But rather they affirme boldly, and conſtantly, that all the worſhip which they doe, tendeth to the honour of God, or of the Saints, whereof they be images. Against worſhipping of idols.

Mat. What though wee ſhould grant them all that they ſay? were not this extreame madneſſe, that they will worſhip God, by doing the things which hee directly forbiddeth? Which he alſo affirmeth to be deſpite againſt him? But howſoeuer they deny it, it is ſo. For when they preferre one idol before an other, and for religions ſake take vpon them long pilgrimages to ſalute ſuch an image, and doe mumble their praiers before them, euen as for that purpoſe they haue many images with them; it is clearer than the light, that they thinke there is in them ſome diuine power: and therfore they be cõuinced that they take thoſe images for Gods. Wherupon Esay moſt ſharply reproued the idolaters of his time, although they euen then ſought the ſame ſhifts. So is the diuell wont to bewitch all thoſe, that receiue idols for religions ſake: for at the beginning indeed, he perſwadeth the, that they be receiued that God may be worſhipped in them; but by little and little, he blindeth them with their mad religion, ſo as at the length they both worſhip them, and put their truſt in them. And indeed (as Avstin ſaid moſt truly) no man looking vpon images, can doe them any worſhip, who is not verily perſwaded in his heart that they heare him. Eſay 44.17.

For this cauſe, the Fathers of the Elibertiue Councell, the yeere from the birth of Chriſt, 330. decreed thus concerning this matter; It is ordained that no pictures bee had Cap. 6. & Can. 31.

had in Churches; leſt that which is honoured and worſhipped bee painted on the walles; againſt thoſe which then would haue images placed in Churches.

Theoph. How then came it to paſſe, that afterward they were receiued into Churches?

Mat. It was decreed after many contentions and iars in the laſt Councell of NICE, about the yeere 754. when the diuell had before brought in many ſuperſtitions into the Church: But it lacked images all the time, from the comming of Ieſus Chriſt, vntill that Councell.

Theoph. Truly I am glad, that in going ouer theſe things, I haue learned at what time images were brought into the Church. Now I will returne againe to the order of our ſpeech. Thou ſaideſt, that in former times the old idolaters vſed the ſame excuſes to defend their idolatries, which the idolaters of our times doe vſe now: who doe ſpecially complaine of this, that they haue very great wrong done them, when they be compared with thoſe ancients, foraſmuch as there is great difference betweene themſelues and the other.

Mat. If it ſhall ſeeme good vnto thee to propound the things wherein they ſay that difference is, I will cauſe thee to vnderſtand, that whatſoeuer they alledge is moſt vaine: and moreouer, that the idolatry of our time, is altogether the ſame, with that ancient idolatrie of the heathen and Iewes.

Theoph. It ſhall very much pleaſe mee to heare that of thee. But they make foure principall points or heads of that difference.

The excuſes of the newer idolaters.

1. Firſt, that thoſe ancients, both Heathen and Iewes, (ſay they) beleeued their images to be gods, which we doe not beleeue.

2. Secondly, they worſhipped many gods, we only one.

3. Thirdly, becauſe they worſhipped the images of things without ſenſe and reaſon, or elſe of moſt wicked men and women, as Iupiter, Mars, Venus, and many other ſuch like: and thoſe images (ſay they) be forbidden in this commandement, but not the images which we worſhip, as of Chriſt, the virgin MARY, and of the Saints that now liue moſt bleſſedly in heauen.

4. Fourthly,

4. Fourthly, and laſt of all, wee giue not that diuine worſhip to our images, which in former times the idolaters gaue to their idols and fained gods. Vpon which things they gather, that indeede thoſe ancients are worthily called and eſteemed idolaters: but that they haue great iniurie done vnto them, when they bee charged with this fault, from the which they thinke themſelues free, vpon the reaſons which I haue reckened vp.

Mar. I will anſwer in order vnto theſe foure points. The anſwer to the excuſes of the newer idolaters.

1. Firſt, they be foully deceiued in this, that they thinke thoſe old idolaters beleeued their idols to be gods: for they changed them according to their pleaſure, but they alwaies kept the ſame gods in their minde.

2. Moreouer, there was no god of theirs, which had not many images: and yet they did not according to that multitude, make to themſelues many gods.

3. Finally, they did daily conſecrate new images: yet had they no purpoſe and intent to make new gods. Whereupon it is plaine, that they were not ſo blockiſh and without ſenſe to beleeue, that an idol of ſtone, or of wood, or of gold, or of ſiluer, was the very eſſence of God: but onely a ſimilitude or likeneſſe of God.

It is indeede certaine, that the Prophets ſometimes reproued the Iſraelites for this, that they ſaid to their idols: Thou art my God. But this was done for the cauſe which I ſpake of before: namely, for that giuing to images the honour due vnto God alone, they eſteemed them as God, although they coloured that idolatry with faire excuſes.

Theoph. Concerning the firſt point, thou haſt ſufficiently ſatisfied me. Let vs therefore come to the ſecond; namely, that the Heathen had many gods.

Theoph. That indeede is true, but they did neuer eſteeme them alike: but rather conſtantly continued in this minde, that there was one chiefe God, to whom all the reſt were ſubiect. For, ſo is the feeling of one God-head engrauen in the minds of men, that it cannot be pluckt out, albeit it be corrupted by their owne witleſſe inuentions, and that more is, by their idolatry, as PAVL ſaith to the Romanes. Rom. 1.

Therefore the other gods, whome they adored beſides that chiefe God, were for this end worſhipped, that they might

might be their patrons: which selfe same thing they also do at this day which adore men Saints, and women Saints. For they take them in the stead of their gods, when they giue that worship to their reliques and images, which is due vnto one highest God.

Theoph. Let vs now come to the third point: and it is this; That the prohibition which is contained in this commandement, is vnderstood onely of those idols, which are the likenesses of fained gods, which the old Ethnicks and Iewes, being idolaters, did worship; and that it doth not extend to the images of the Saints that be in heauen.

Mat. This distinction is most false: for εἰδωλον in Greeke is altogether the same that image is in Latine. But both do signifie the likenesses which are made vpon foolish deuotion. Whereupon it is, that they who worship them are called εἰδωλολάτραι, that is, worshippers of idols or images.

But let vs grant there is that difference or diuersitie betweene these words which they affirme, what will it make for them? Forasmuch as there is so generall a prohibition in this commandement, Thou shalt make to thy selfe no grauen image, neither any likenesse of the things, &c. that it admitteth no exception or restraint. For it doth plainly comprehend euery religious likenesse of all things, aswell liuing as without sense, reasonable or vnreasonable, men and women, aswell which now liue blessedly in heauen, as of the wicked, which now suffer the torments of their sins in hell. For the difference of the things to which the worship due to God, is, giuen, taketh not away the reproch and iniury done vnto God.

Theoph. Now, what answerest thou to the last point: namely, that they giue not the same worship to their idols, which in times past the ancient Ethnickes gaue to their fained gods.

Mat. I answer, that they be altogether alike: which shall plainely appeare, if we do a little more diligently looke into both, and make a comparison betweene them.

A comparing of the old and new idolaters.

1. The Ethnicks sacrificed to their idols: so also doe the idolaters of our time. For they say Masses (which they hold to be sacrifices) to the honour of Saints, yea at their Altars.

2. They

2. They offred them gifts, and ſo alſo do our idolaters.

3. They ſaluted them, they fell down vpon their knees before them, and finally made their praiers vnto them. Which thing alſo is diligently obſerued and done by the idolaters of our time.

4. They called vpon ſome for the plague, vpon other ſome for the ſafe deliuerance of women, other ſome for tempeſts vpon the ſea, other ſome to obtaine raine, and other ſome for faire weather: ſo alſo doe our idolaters.

5. They apparelled them, they ſet vp lights to them, they burnt incenſe: the ſame alſo do our idolaters.

6. They carried them about in their ſolemne ſupplications, they followed them moſt deuoutly, beeing carried vpon mens ſhoulders, and to this purpoſe, that they might obtaine their requeſts. The ſame alſo is vſed among our idolaters.

7. They appointed vnto them formes of praiers and worſhip, they built them Churches, and ordained Prieſts, of whom their ſeruice might be done: ſo alſo doe ours.

8. They ſought high places, and places vnreſorted to by men, planted with trees, wherein they built the Chappels of their idols. By meanes whereof, wretched men (made drunke with blinde deuotion) were ſo out of their wits, that there was very great reſort of people vnto them, no otherwiſe than as if God himſelfe had beene preſent there. The idolaters of our time haue carefully done all theſe things to the very ſelfe-ſame end.

9. In each citie and towne one was choſen, to be the patron of the place, and the protecting God. The ſame alſo doe ours.

10. They ſwore by their names, and had them continually in their mouth, and alwaies carried about with them their images to worſhip. The ſame alſo doe our idolaters. To conclude, at length the names of the idols were changed, but the ſame idolatry is ſtill retained.

But we muſt diligently marke the craft of Sathan in this behalfe. For, to the end hee might reſtore and bring in againe the old idolatry, he hath borrowed the names of the holy Apoſtles and Martyrs, by whome in former times it was ouerthrowen and driuen away, and by this meanes it

hath put on another perſon, that it might not be knowen.

Theoph. I haue taken no ſmall pleaſure by that which thou haſt ſpoken vpon theſe foure points. Now, that our ſpeech may end there where it begun, I doe acknowledge that the diuell, which in our age hath brought in againe the ancient idolatry, vpholdeth it by no other arguments, than thoſe wherewith in former times it was defended by him.

Mat. It is euen ſo. For, whereas the idolaters of our age deuiſing a worſhip of God and images of Saints, pretend and ſay, that the remembrance of God is the better engrauen in their minds, the ſelfe ſame thing was pretended by thoſe old idolaters.

Theoph. It is very likely that men euen from the beginning were by theſe two reaſons moqued to idolatry: namely, that both they might worſhip God better, and deepely faſten the remembrance of him in their minds.

Mat. But there is nothing which is more to the diſhonour of God, and more putteth him out of the mindes of men, than idolatry.

Theoph. Why ſo?

Mat. Becauſe there can bee no greater deſpite done to God, than (contrary to his expreſſe forbidding) to giue the worſhip due to him, vnto dumbe and dead images; which alſo we may liken to fetters, ſnares, or gins, wherwith men be held faſt vpon the ground, beeing lets and hinderances to their minds, that they looke not vp to heauen, neither come to God with true knowledge, and remembrance of him.

Theoph. I deſire, if it ſhall not be troubleſome to you, to alledge three obiections, wherewith idolaters labour to defend themſelues: not that I make any doubt of things ſo plaine, but to the end I may be able fitly to anſwer the aduerſaries, if at any time I haue occaſion.

Mat. Thou ſhalt not trouble me, though thou enlarge this ſpeech: for I am much delighted when any occaſion is giuen me, to diſcouer the craft of the diuell; who vnder colour of Religion and worſhipping of God, bringeth it to paſſe, that he himſelfe is worſhipped of idolaters. Therfore propound thoſe obiections.

Theoph.

Theoph. The firſt of them is this, that they giue not to the images the adoration or worſhip due vnto God: For they ſay, they giue to images only that worſhip which they call δουλεία, and that they doe reſerue λατρεία vnto God. The firſt obiection of the idolaters of our time.

Mat. This diſtinction is nothing elſe but a matter fained of the Greekes, as it may appeare by the words themſelues being Greeke, wherwith they might cloke the vngodlines of the idolatry brought into the church by them. Howbeit by this diſtinction they meant that they worſhipped God, and ſerued the images. But their deedes declare that the matter is farre otherwiſe. For if it were their purpoſe to worſhip the images with the worſhip which they ſay is to be reſerued for God, what would they doe more, ſeeing they fall downe vpon their knees, and moſt deuoutly ſalute them whenſoeuer they come in their ſight? The anſwer to it.

But let vs grant that the idols (as they ſay) be not worſhipped, but ſerued of them, are they not in expreſſe words condemned of God by the prohibition of this commandement, when after theſe words; THOV SHALT NOT BOVV DOVVNE TO THEM, the Lord ſtraightway addeth, Neither ſhalt thou ſerue them? Which things being ſo, it is plaine that this diſtinction is moſt friuolous, and that it is onely in words, by the which they would blinde the eies of the ſimple, eſpecially ſeeing it is certaine that the Scripture vſeth thoſe words, δουλεία & λατρεία for the ſelfe ſame thing, and attributeth both of them vnto God. Rom 1 9. and 7.6. and 12. 1.

Theoph. Now I come to their other obiection, which is of the Cherubins, and the braſen ſerpent, that were made by God his owne commandement: the Cherubins to couer the Arke of the couenant, but the braſen ſerpent was ſet vp in the wilderneſſe, that ſuch as were ſtung by the biting of the ſerpents, by the ſight thereof might be healed, and deliuered from preſent death. And from hence they will conclude, that it is lawfull to haue images in churches. The ſecond obiection. Exod. 25. 18. Nnmb. 21. 8.

Mat. Theſe examples doe not any thing at all ſerue their turne. For God himſelfe had commanded the Cherubines, as alſo the braſen Serpent, not indeede to be adored or worſhipped, but to repreſent or ſignifie ſome things fit for that time, when the Ceremoniall law was in vſe. For the Cherubins were in that holy inner place, The anſwer.

which is called the holieſt of all, out of the ſight of all, ſaue onely of the high Prieſt, who went into it onely once euery yeere: ſo as all occaſion of abuſing them was taken away. Concerning the braſen Serpent, EZECHIAS is ſpecially commended of the holy Ghoſt, for that he brake it, becauſe after a ſort it was worſhipped of the people. Now therefore with what face dare they alledge theſe examples to vphold their images, ſet vp contrary to the expreſſe commandement of God? ſeeing eſpecially there is ſo filthy an abuſe of them vnto all kinde of idolatry.

2. King. 18. 4.

Theoph. But what did the Cherubins, and the braſen ſerpent ſignifie?

Mat. Euery Cherubin had foure wings: with two they couered their face; whereby was taught, that the Angels themſelues be ſo ſtricken with that brightneſſe of the Diuine Maieſtie, that they cannot endure it, and ſo be compelled to couer their faces: with the other two wings they couered the mercy ſeate which was vpon the Arke, to inſtruct vs that God is incomprehenſible, and therefore ought not to bee repreſented by any humane likeneſſe. Touching the braſen Serpent, God ſignified by it, that all they whom that old ſerpent (namely the diuell, with whoſe poiſon, and that indeed deadly, wee are infected through ſinne) had bitten, were healed, ſo as by faith they doe flie vnto Chriſts death. For the braſen Serpent was a figure of Chriſt, as the Lord himſelfe teacheth in theſe words; As MOSES lifted vp the Serpent in the wilderneſſe, ſo muſt the Sonne of man be lifted vp, that whoſoeuer beleeueth in him, ſhould not periſh, but haue life euerlaſting.

Iohn 3. 14.

The third obiection.

Theoph. I am ſatisfied for the ſecond obiection: the third is behinde, wherein they alledge almoſt innumerable miracles, which were wrought in fauour of the worſhippers of idols, and for the puniſhment of ſuch as deſpiſe them.

The anſwer.

Mat. Although I might moſt worthily reiect the greateſt part of thoſe miracles as falſe and fained, yet will I grant this, that they may be all taken for miracles indeed. But what can they build with them? Might not the heathen boaſt the ſelfe ſame thing of their idols? Let prophane hiſtories be read, they will affoord infinite examples of

Valer. Max. lib. 1. cap. 1.

thoſe

thoſe things, neither indeed is it maruell. For, the diuell, to the end hee might eſtabliſh his owne falſe doctrine, would therein follow God.

Theoph. How?

Mat. As God when he meant to open his truth vnto men, ſent forth true Prophets and Apoſtles to preach it; and furniſhed them with the power of the Holy Ghoſt that they might confirme it by ſundry miracles: ſo the diuell the father of lies aſſaied the ſame thing, when hee would bring in idolatrie and ſuperſtition into the world. For, he raiſed vp falſe Prophets and Apoſtles to preach it, and gaue them the power of working miracles, for the confirmation of it. Hereupon it is, that Chriſt warneth vs, diligently to take heede of falſe Prophets, who (ſaith hee) ſhall doe great ſignes and miracles, ſo as they ſhall deceiue (if it were poſſible) the very elect. Whereunto alſo may be applied the ſaying of the Apoſtle ſpeaking of Antichriſt: Whoſe comming is by the working of Sathan, with all power and ſignes, and lying wonders. Mat. 24. 24. 2. Theſ. 2. 9.

Theoph. Why doth the Apoſtle call them lying wonders?

Mat. Not ſo much to note the falſhood of them, as to giue vs to vnderſtand of the end whereat thoſe miracles doe ſhoot: and that is, to confirme moſt falſe and lying doctrine, ſuch as are idolatrie & ſuperſtition, which are directly contrary to Gods word, which indeed ought to bee vnto vs in ſtead of a touchſtone, whereby to diſcerne true miracles from falſe; that we be not deceiued by them.

Theoph. Thou thinkeſt therefore that all miracles, which ſerue to confirme falſe doctrine, are wrought by the diuel, and are therefore to be refuſed as lies, and done to deceiue.

Mat. I thinke ſo. And for this cauſe; doth the Lord warne vs by MOSES, if there ariſe in the middeſt of vs a Prophet, that foreſheweth things to come, or ſheweth any other ſignes with purpoſe to turne vs aſide from his worſhip, that we doe not heare ſuch a Prophet. For the Lord your God (ſaith he) prooueth you, to ſee whether you loue him with all your heart. Deut. 13. 1. 2. 3.

Theoph. But how can the diuel haue the power to worke miracles, which appertaineth only to God?

Mat. The Lord looſeth the bridle vnto him, and giueth

that power, that ſo he may auenge himſelfe, vpon thoſe which deſpiſe and refuſe his truth; of whom PAVL thus writeth; Therefore will the Lord ſend them ſtrong deluſions, that they may beleeue lies.

2.The.2,11.

Theoph. Thou haſt now ſatisfied me concerning the firſt part of this commandement: and thoſe abuſes haue beene diſcuſſed in it, which are wont to be brought into the worſhip of God, but chiefely the greateſt among them, namely idolatry. It remaineth therefore, that we come to the other part, to the end we may know, what is to be done in the outward ſeruice of God, that is framed according to his owne will.

The other part of the 2.commandement.

Mat. That is, when worſhip is giuen him both agreeable to his nature, and acceptable to his Maieſtie.

Theoph. What is that worſhip or adoration agreeable to the nature of God?

Mat. It is taught of Chriſt himſelfe, ſpeaking of that woman of Samaria, when he ſaith: The houre commeth and now is, when the true worſhippers ſhall worſhip the Father in ſpirit and truth: For the Father requireth euen ſuch to worſhip him. Now he oppoſeth or ſetteth ſpirituall worſhip which God requireth, againſt carnall worſhip deuiſed by men: which, becauſe it is anſwerable to their carnall and corrupt nature, maruellouſly pleaſeth themſelues, but doth moſt highly diſpleaſe God that is a ſpirit. Yea indeed no worſhip but ſpirituall is acceptable vnto him.

Of ſpirituall worſhip. Ioh.4.23.

Theoph. Now it is to be ſeene, wherein that adoration or ſpirituall worſhip ſtandeth.

Mat. Sincere praier is the chiefe part of it, whether it be publike or priuate, when our hearts be lifted vp to God with a pure conſcience, all things being taken away that may withdraw or eſtrange our minds from him, as images, candles, and ſuch other inuentions of men, falling downe vpon our knees, our heads vncouered, and hands lifted vp to heauen.

Mat. Are not kneeling, vncouering of the head, and lifting the hands vp to heauen, carnall ceremonies?

Mat. No, in no wiſe, For we call them carnall ceremonies, that were deuiſed by men, and ſuch as tie our mindes to theſe earthly things: but theſe are both ordained of God

God, and ſo bring forth farre diuers or vnlike effects. For they call our minds from theſe earthly & fraile things, and doe lift them vp to true pietie, and ſpirituall meditation.

Theoph. Is there nothing elſe required to worſhip God ſpiritually, beſides the things which thou haſt reckned vp?

Mat. There is ſomewhat elſe required: namely, that we doe heare his word, and receiue the Sacraments with humbleneſſe, and reuerence of minde, and with purity of conſcience. Concerning the reſt, ſo as we auoide all ſuperſtitious and humane ceremonies, we muſt vſe the liberty which Chriſt by his death hath purchaſed for vs.

Theoph. What is that Chriſtian liberty?

Mat. It is in euery part of it, a ſpirituall thing: the whole force whereof ſtandeth in the appeaſing and quieting of fearefull conſciences, that God may bee ſo much the more earneſtly glorified of vs. And indeede it conſiſteth of foure parts, the firſt two whereof (although they bee the chiefe) doe not make much for that we haue in hand: they were alſo handled by vs in the former booke, yea rather they be the argument of it. Of Chriſtian liberty.

Theoph. Neuertheleſſe I would haue you declare them in a few words, that ſo I might call to minde the things that haue beene already ſpoken of before.

Mat. The firſt is, an effect of our redemption: namely, that Chriſt hauing by his death redeemed vs from the ſlauery and tyranny of the diuell, hath brought vs into the moſt happy liberty of his kingdome. For by it we be taken for the ſonnes of God, and therefore heires of his kingdome. For this cauſe Chriſt ſaid to the Iewes, The ſeruant abideth not for euer in the houſe, but the Son abideth for euer. Therefore if the Sonne haue freed you, you ſhall be free indeed. 1. Ioh. 8. 35.

The other part hangeth on the former, and it is a fruite of our regeneration, by the which when Chriſt hath ſet vs free from the ſeruitude of ſinne, wee are reſtored into liberty by his Spirit, ſo as both we haue wil, and ability from the heart to ſerue God. Therfore the Apoſtle ſaith: Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. 2. 2. Cor. 3. 17.

Theoph. Declare the other parts of Chriſtian liberty, appertaining to the ſpeech we haue in hand.

Mat. Either of them hangeth vpon our redemption. Now the first is this; that Christ by his death hauing put an end to all the ceremonies (which were nothing else but shadowes and figures) he hath deliuered vs from the bondage of them, to the end we might offer vnto him a worship meerely or altogether spirituall.

Col.2.16. Heb.10.1. But if we be deliuered from all those ceremonies which were commanded of God; by farre stronger reason are we set free from those, which were inuented by men, which also haue in them plaine superstition.

4. Of the vse of meats and other things. The last part standeth herein, that by the death of Christ the lawfull vse of the creatures which we had lost in ADAM through sinne, is againe restored and renewed vnto vs.

Theoph. How commeth that to passe?

Mat. Men by sinne became the enemies of God, and therfore vnworthy to vse the good things of God: but being reconciled to him by the death of his Sonne, and adopted or taken to be his sonnes, we may now with liberty of conscience vse all the blessings of the earth, and other creatures which he giueth vs to sustaine our life, to the end we might so much the more ernestly serue and worship him; vntill he translate vs from this life into that eternall inheritance. Hence is that of PAVL: To the pure indeede all things are pure: but to the vncleane and vnbeleeuers nothing is pure. By which things it appeareth that Christian libertie doth by no meanes loose the bridle to our carnall desires, but standeth onely in this, to bring peace to troubled consciences, whether they be out of quiet, and full of care about the forgiueneſſe of their sinnes, or else be troubled about the vse of the creatures, and of other indifferent things, so as they may vse them most freely, without any doubt or scruple of conscience.

Tit.1.15.

Theoph. But the vse of the creatures and of indifferent things, seemeth not to auaile much to the quieting of our conscience, much lesse to the spirituall worship of God, whereunto notwithstanding you did ascribe it.

Mat. It profiteth much vnto both: and indeede first of all, except wee doe certainly know that wee may freely vse the creatures of God, our consciences shall neuer haue rest, yea rather they shal wauer, & be tossed to and fro with doubting

doubting, and ſuperſtition. Therefore PAVL ſaith, Bleſſed is he that condemneth not himſelfe in that which hee alloweth, that is to ſay, which is certainely perſwaded with himſelfe, what is allowed or diſallowed of God. Rom 14.22.

Concerning the ſpirituall worſhip due vnto God, as it is defiled by a ſuperſtitious abſtaining from the creatures, ſo by the lawfull vſe of them in his feare, & without offence, it is much augmented: yea rather in this part, there is a certain teſtimony of the ſpirituall worſhip which we deſire to giue vnto him, when as we will not ſubmit our ſelues to the ſuperſtitious commandements of men. Therfore PAVL ſpeaking of his Chriſtian liberty, ſaith: In the liberty wherwith Chriſt hath made vs free, continue, or ſtand you, and be not againe entangled with the yoke of bondage. Gal 5.1.

Theoph. What meaneſt thou when thou ſaiedſt, Wee were to vſe the creatures of God in his feare?

Mat. That is to ſay, ſoberly and reuerently, as it were before him.

Theoph. Why madeſt thou mention of offence?

Mat. Becauſe it muſt ſpecially be taken heed vnto, that by our liberty we giue no offence to the weake. For the doctrine of chriſtian liberty, is not againſt the rule of charity.

Theoph. What is an offence?

Mat. The word properly ſignifieth ſomething laide in the way, vpon the which he that walketh may ſtumble and fall. In this place by tranſlation, or a borrowed kinde of ſenſe, it is taken for that, by the which we are hindred from receiuing the doctrine of the truth, or elſe be turned from it, after we haue receiued it. In which ſenſe he is ſaid to offend one which either ſaith or doth any thing whereby the ſaluation of his neighbour is hindred. Now that is a moſt grieuous ſinne. For Chriſt ſaith, Whoſoeuer ſhall offend one of the little ones that beleeue in mee, it were better for him that a milſtone were hanged about his necke, and that he ſhould be drowned in the bottome of the ſea. Of offences. Mat.18.6.

Theoph. May there not be ſome certaine rule ſet downe whereby it may be vndoubtedly knowne, in what things and how we are to beware, that we giue not offence to our neighbour?

Mat. There is, but that wee may rightly vnderſtand it,

wee

we muſt know, that there be two kinds of offences. There is one called an offence taken, which falleth vpon the head of him that taketh it, forasmuch as no occaſion was giuen. As for example, if any take offence becauſe his neighbour doth ſomwhat that is commanded of God, or refuſeth to do ſome euill thing, forbidden of God. For euen as our liberty muſt be ſubiect vnto charity, ſo charity & the righteouſnes of the Law, required in the ſecond Table, ought to be ſubiect to the purity of faith. Therefore thou maieſt not offend God, to auoid the offence of thy neighbour.

The other kind of offence, is called offence giuen, the fault and condemnation whereof, lighteth vpon him by whom it is giuen. As when one giueth offence to his neighbour, by doing ſomthing forbidden of God, or elſe offendeth the vnlearned and weake, by an vncharitable & vndiſcreet vſing of indifferent things.

Theoph. What vnderſtandeſt thou by indifferent things?

Mat. Thoſe, which of themſelues be neither good nor euil; ſuch as it is knowne theſe be; to eat fleſh or fiſh. Now, I ſaid, that we muſt not offend the weake, through the vſe of them. For the Apoſtle ſaith, Deſtroy thou not him with thy meat, for whom Chriſt died.

Rom. 14. 15.

And againe, in another place; If meate offend my brother, I wil eat no fleſh while the world ſtandeth; that I may not offend my brother.

1. Cor 8. 13.

Theo. But why doſt thou mention the weake onely, when thou ſpeakeſt of an offence giuen in indifferent things?

Mat. Becauſe we muſt abſtaine from them, onely for the weakes ſake, vntill they haue beene taught and confirmed in the knowledge of Chriſtian liberty; but not for the malicious men, and mockers of Chriſtian liberty; among whom alſo ſometime it is profitable that wee claime and take our liberty, that it may be knowne, what doctrine or Religion we profeſſe.

Theoph. The third part of this commaundement is behinde: I would haue thee open that in few words.

Mat. It beginneth at theſe words; I am the Lord, thy God, ſtrong, ſealous, &c. He calleth himſelfe our God, both to oppoſe himſelfe to idols, as ſpecially to ſhew, that it is hee alone, to whom wee ought to cleaue; ſeeing

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that he is our God, that is mercifull and good. He calleth himſelfe ſtrong and iealous, to teach vs, that he both can, & will reuenge ſo great an iniury, and indeed with ſo grieuous vengeance, that it ſhall ſtretch it ſelfe to their childrē, euen to the third and fourth generation of ſuch as follow the vngodlineſſe of their fathers: Euen as alſo hee ſheweth his perpetuall mercie and goodneſſe, to many generations, vnto them which loue him and keepe his law.

Theoph. There bee three things in this thy expoſition, of which I thinke it fit to aske thee.

Firſt, in what ſence God is ſaid to be iealous: foraſmuch as the affection of iealouſie doth not any way agree to his Maieſtie.

Mat. The Lord giueth himſelfe this title, hauing reſpect to the couenant made with vs. Now this he often compareth vnto marriage; as well for the vnion which wee haue with him, as for the mutuall fidelitie which wee alſo haue promiſed vnto him. Hereof it cōmeth, that by the Prophet he ſaith; I will mary thee to my ſelfe, in faithfulneſſe: as if he did ſay, that as hee performed to vs all the duties of a faithfull and true husband, euen ſo hee required againe by couenant, of vs, loue and chaſtitie, belonging to marriage. And for this cauſe he complaineth, & not ſeldome, by his Prophets, that Iſrael committed fonication with idols, & was polluted or defiled with adulterie. When therefore he calleth himſelfe Iealous, he doth it, that with one word he may cut off all the vaine excuſes, wherewith idolaters ſeeke to hide themſelues. For this he meaneth; that he cannot by any meanes beare it, that vnder any colour, we ſhould giue the loue & reuerence, due to him, vnto idols: as an husbād that religiouſly & holily loueth his wife, cannot endure it, whatſoeuer ſhee pretendeth, that his wife ſhould beſtow the ſignes of her friendſhip & loue vpon another. Moreouer, by this title he warneth vs, that at the laſt he will execute no leſſe puniſhment vpon Idolaters, than a iealous huſband vpon his wife, often taken by him in adulterie.

Why God is called iealous.

Hoſ 2. 20.

Ier. 3.

Hoſ 2.

Theoph. The other thing cometh to my remembrance, whereof I ſaid I would aske; how it agreeth with the iuſtice of God to require the puniſhment of the fathers offence, of his poſteritie.

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we muſt know, that there be two kinds of offences. There is one called an offence taken, which falleth vpon the head of him that taketh it, forasmuch as no occaſion was giuen. As for example, if any take offence becauſe his neighbour doth ſomwhat that is commanded of God, or refuſeth to do ſome euill thing, forbidden of God. For euen as our liberty muſt be ſubiect vnto charity, ſo charity & the righteouſnes of the Law, required in the ſecond Table, ought to be ſubiect to the purity of faith. Therefore thou maieſt not offend God, to auoid the offence of thy neighbour.

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Why God is called iealous.

Hos 2.20.

Ier.3.

Hos 2.

Theoph. The other thing cometh to my remembrance, whereof I said I would aske; how it agreeth with the iustice of God to require the punishment of the fathers offence, of his posteritie.

Mat.

Mat. The Lord meaneth not, that the children ſhould be puniſhed for the ſinnes of the parents, foraſmuch as he
Eze.18.10 ſaith by the Prophet; That he will not, that the ſon ſhould beare the iniquity of the father, or the father beare the iniquity of the ſonne. But this viſitation is fulfilled, when the Lord taketh from the houſe of the vngodly his grace, the light of his truth, & the other helps of his ſaluation. Now then, nothing elſe can be looked for, but that the children, being forſaken of God, ſhould liue moſt wickedly, & moue God to take vengeance vpon them. From hence is that prepoſterous and diſordered deſire of the children to follow the idolatrous way of their parents: whereupon it commeth, that they excuſe their idolatrie by this one pretence, namely, the example of their fathers. But if the Lord doe threaten ſo great puniſhment to Idolaters, ſo much blinded, that they thinke God is rightly worſhipped of them: how much more fearefull iudgement ought they to
Againſt the Nicodemites, looke for, that bee illuminated with the light of his truth, and notwithſtanding defile themſelues with idolatrie and ſuperſtitions, againſt their conſciences?

Theoph. Thoſe men are wont to anſwer (which alſo my ſelfe haue heard from them, more then once) that they acknowledge no ſin in that; ſeeing they lift vp their mindes vnto God, in the middeſt of thoſe vngodly ſuperſtitions: which alſo they hate, with all their harts.

Mat. It is a moſt vaine excuſe, which the diuell hath put into their heads to lull their conſciences aſleepe, and ſo to hold them in his nets.

Theoph But how can they bee conuinced of idolatrie? ſeeing that the outward actions of men ſhould bee iudged of, by the inward action of the heart.

Mat. That indeede is true, in ſuch thinges as of themſelues be good or indifferent, and be made ill by an ill intent: as, if one praied to God, to be praiſed & well thought of. But concerning actions of their owne nature euill, and expreſly forbidden of God, as is outward idolatrie, there is no inward affection of the minde which can make them good, and acquit them from ſinne.

Theoph. In what place is outward idolatrie forbidden?

Mat. In the ſecond commandement; where, by name the

the Lord forbiddeth, that no man bow himſelfe to idols, or worſhip them. Which thing is often repeated in ſundry places of the Scripture.

Moreouer, it may be gathered of that, which the Lord anſwered ELIAS, when he noted, & (as it were by outward ſignes) marked the Iſraelites, which had not fallen away from his religion. For he ſaith, I haue reſerued to my ſelfe ſeuen thouſand men, which haue not bowed the knee to the image BAAL. In which words he declareth, that all ſuch as worſhipped BAAL with the outward geſture, were idolaters, although they might pretend the inward affection of their minde to bee otherwiſe. Is it not alſo iuſt and right, that God ſhould be worſhipped of vs in our bodies, aſwell as in our minds, foraſmuch as he is the maker of both? Rom. 11. 4.

Theoph. Againe, they doe alledge for themſelues, the example of NAAMAN the Syrian; who, beeing lightned with the knowledge of the true God through that miraculous cure, ſaid vnto the Prophet; Herein the Lord be mercifull to thy ſeruant, when my Lord ſhall goe into the houſe of RIMMON to worſhip there, & ſhall leane vpon my hand, & I bow my ſelfe in the houſe of RIMMON: In this bowing my ſelfe in the houſe of RIMMON, I beſeech the Lord to forgiue his ſeruant, in this thing. To whome the Prophet anſwered: Goe in peace. Of which words they gather, that the Prophet gaue his conſent, he ſhould do that thing. 2. King. 5.

Mat. This example maketh more againſt them, than for them: for that NAAMAN the Syrian, the chiefe captaine of the hoaſt of the King of ARAM, and moſt deare to the king himſelfe, when he was firſt conuerted to the religion of the true God, knew that he ſinned, if he did but onely apply himſelfe (in his ſeruice and bowing) to the King while he worſhipped: and he praieth God to forgiue him that ſinne. But theſe our Nicodemites, which haue ſo many yeeres beene taught the knowledge of God, and of his ſpirituall worſhip, and indeede farre more clearely than the Fathers vnder the Law euer were, can not be brought thus farre, to confeſſe that they ſinne, when euery where of their owne voluntary accord, and without any inforcement of the kings authoritie, that vſeth their ſeruice, they bee partakers of idolatrie and ſuperſtitions. Verily, the confeſſion

confeſſion of NAAMAN the Syrian ſhall bee ſufficient to condemne them in the day of iudgement: ſo farre off therefore it is, that by it they can by any meanes defend themſelues. Concerning the anſwer of the Prophet, GOE IN PEACE; he doth not by it allow the ſinne of NAAMAN, neither was it his minde to flatter NAAMAN: But when he ſaw him, in ſo little ſpace of time to haue profited ſo well in the knowledge and feare of God, as that freely he confeſſed and condemned his owne infirmitie; he encouraged him, and putteth him in hope, that God would ſtrengthen him, and bring that to perfection, which he had begun in him.

For this cauſe he ſaith, Goe in peace. But if he had to doe with the Nicodemites of our age, hee would haue vſed a farre other manner of ſpeech, and haue cried out aloud the ſame thing, which ELIAS (that went before him) did to the Iewes of his time, mingling the worſhip of idols with the ſeruice of God; How long doe yee halt betweene two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow him: but if BAAL be he, goe after him.

1 2.Re.18.21.

Theoph. I am not a little glad, that I haue gotten the meaning of that place. For ſometimes I haue beene troubled about the looſing or vntying of that knot. I doe not therefore now thinke, that the Nicodemites haue any excuſe, whereby to cleare themſelues from the crime of idolatry: ſeeing it is euident, that this excuſe of theirs is nothing woorth.

Mat. Adde hereunto, that there bee againſt them the examples of DANIEL and his fellowes, and of innumerable Martyrs, who rather choſe to ſuffer moſt cruell death, than neuer ſo little to make ſhew that they worſhipped idols. Foraſmuch therefore as they dare not impute foole-hardines to theſe faithfull ſeruants of God (of whom the Scripture it ſelfe reporteth honourably) it followeth of neceſſitie, that they muſt condemne themſelues; becauſe they feare men more than God, of which fault, there is no doubt but their owne conſcience accuſeth them. Let them therefore thinke vpon that ſentence pronounced by God againſt the fearefull, (that is, ſuch as knowing the truth, doe for feare diſſemble it; whom he ioyneth with vnbe-

vnbeleeuers, abhominable, murtherers, whooremongers, ſorcerers, and liers) to whome he ſaith; Their part is appointed in the lake which burneth with fire & brimſtone: which is the ſecond death. Let them, I ſay, remember that ſentence; that (if they haue any care of their ſaluation) they may preuent the wrath and iudgement of God, by true repentance. Apoc 21.8.

Theoph. Let vs now returne to the words of the commandement. Why did he rather ſay, TO THEM THAT HATE MEE, than, TO THEM VVHICH DOE NOT OBEY MEE?

Mat. That he might make the vngodlineſſe of ſuch as obey him not, eſpecially of thoſe which breake this commandement, the more manifeſt. For, by that their diſobedience, they declare the inward hatred, which they beare towards him. But contrariwiſe, the godly, by keeping of his commandements, do witneſſe their loue and reuerence of him. Whereby it is apparant, how much idolaters and ſuperſtitious perſons be deceiued, when they thinke to declare their loue toward God, by their phantaſticall and braine-ſicke religions; ſeeing God himſelfe teſtifieth, that ſuch deuices be ſignes of the greateſt hatred againſt him. And indeede, by theſe things is ouerthrowen that moſt falſe and hurtfull principle of idolaters, wherein they affirme, that all things which bee done with a good intent (that is, with a minde to ſerue God) are well done. Of good intents.

Theoph. But yet it ſeemeth impoſſible, that good intents ſhould be ill.

Mat. True, if thou meane ſuch intents, as may truly be called good.

Theoph. Which are they?

Mat. Such as are grounded vpon the expreſſe word of God. For, the other which be againſt the word of God, howſoeuer men eſteeme them to bee good, yet are they moſt abominable and diſpleaſing to God. Therefore, the good intents, as they call them, of idolaters, and ſuperſtitious perſons, are no better than the intents of the Iewes, which put Chriſt to death; or of thoſe, which haue ſlaine almoſt innumerable faithfull ſeruants of Chriſt, of whom euen Chriſt himſelfe witneſſeth, that they thought they did God ſeruice. Ioh. 16.2.

Theoph.

Theoph. Let vs goe forward. Why doth God, ſpeaking of puniſhment, mention onely three or foure generations, and, ſpeaking of reward, nameth thouſands?

Mat. To teach vs, that he is more inclining to gentleneſſe, and doing of good, than to ſeuerity. Notwithſtanding, the ſentence pronounced of God is not ſo generall, but that ſtill hee reſerueth it in his owne liberty to ſhew himſelfe mercifull when he pleaſeth, to the children of the wicked, and to refuſe and caſt off ſuch of the ſeede of the faithfull, whom it ſhall ſeeme good vnto him. Neuertheleſſe, he ſo tempereth it, that his promiſe and threatning may appeare to be neither vaine nor deceitfull.

Theoph. But theſe things ſeeme to agree rather to the whole Law, than to this commandement alone.

Ephe. 6. 2. *Mat.* Right. For the Apoſtle witneſſeth, that the fift commandement is the firſt with promiſe; namely, ſpeciall.

Theoph. Wherefore then are they put into this commandement?

Mat. Becauſe the breach of the whole Law followeth vpon the breaking of this. For, when any man goeth about to ſet vp another than the true God, he hath already broken the whole Law. For, whatſoeuer can be performed or done by him, cannot be eſteemed obedience to God; but to the idol which he hath made.

Adde this alſo, that idolaters are ſo buſied in their ſuperſtitions, ioyned moſt neerely with idolatry, and doe ſo ſwell with a vaine opinion of merit, that they eaſily deſpiſe and ſet light by the lawfull keeping of Gods commandements: which, daily experience doth plentifully witneſſe.

The third Commandement.

Thou ſhalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vaine. For, the Lord will not hold him guiltleſſe that taketh his name in vaine.

Theoph. Wee haue beene long in the expoſition of the ſecond commandement: becauſe the matter it ſelfe required it. Now we are come to the third. And firſt, let vs ſee, how many parts there be of it.

Mat. Three, as of the former.

1. In

1. In the first, is forbidden the rash vse of Gods name.
2. In the second, is commanded the sanctifying of it: and this is contained vnder a prohibition.
3. The third is a threatning pronounced against the breakers of this commandement.

Theoph. That the exposition of this commandement may be the easier, I will demand three things.
1. First, in what sense the name of God is taken, in this place.
2. Secondly, what it is to take the name of God in vaine.
3. Thirdly, how many waies it may be taken in vaine.

Theoph. Declare, what the name of God signifieth.

Mat. It is first taken for God himselfe: as it is easie to gather out of the words of MOSES: If thou shalt not take heede to doe all the words of this law, which are written in this booke, to feare that glorious and terrible name, THE LORD THY GOD, the Lord will make thy plagues wonderfull. Secondly, it signifieth all those things, which concerne his glory: as his word and workes. The first part of the third commandement is of Gods name: Deut. 28.58.

Theoph. But now what is it to take the name of God in vaine?

Mat. To speake of God, or his words, or works, contemptuously, lightly and rashly: this is to prophane and vnhallow his Maiestie. For this cause he said rather, THE NAME OF THE LORD THY GOD, than MY NAME. For, this he meant; that, seeing the Lord is our God, we ought to thinke so reuerently of his Maiestie, that of vs it should be had in most reuerent and inuiolable estimation. How the name of God is taken in vaine.

Theoph. Now are we to see, how many waies the name of God is taken in vaine: which is the third point of the first part of this commandement.

Mat. It may indeede bee taken in vaine, sundry waies: which notwithstanding I will reduce vnto fiue.

1. The first, which is also the most grieuous, is blasphemie, that is, railing, namely, when a man doth not onely speake contemptuously of God, but doth also vse reproachfull words, and such as sauour of contempt against his Maiestie, as they do, that renounce God. To whome also, we doe ioyne all those, that trample vnder their feete the How many waies it is taken in vaine.

most holy mystery of our saluation wrought by Christ, and doe vsually sweare by his death, bloud, body, and other parts thereof: as, his head and belly; and that, for the most part, of set purpose, and for the nonce; not being stirred or occasioned thereto, by anger: albeit, indeed, there bee no anger, that before God can excuse so horrible blasphemie.

Theoph. Such men verily bee farre off from giuing those thankes which we owe vnto him; in that he vouchsafed to take vpon him our humane nature; and that, in it (to deliuer vs from euerlasting death) he would be abased to the most shamefull death of the crosse.

Mat. Thou saist true. And therein they shew themselues worse than the very Iewes, of whom he was crucified. For, if they had knowen him, they would not haue crucified the Lord of glory, saith PAVL. Therefore, except they repent, it must needs come to passe, that (to their eternall misery) they shall feele his most iust wrath and iudgement, seeing that, of set purpose they doe so prophane the benefit of our redemption wrought by him.

1 Cor. 2.

Theoph. Let vs search out another way, whereby the name of God is taken in vaine.

The prophaning of Gods word.

Mat. When we abuse the holy Scripture: which is done chiefly three waies.

1. First, when it is prophaned by ridiculous scoffes and mocks, as the manner of drunkards and prophane men is.

2. Secondly, when it is corrupted; that is, wrested otherwise than the true sense is: as heretikes doe.

3. Thirdly, when any abuseth it to enchantments or sorceries, for the healing of men or beasts, and such like.

Theoph. But they which by that meanes heale diseases, (especially those of men) do say, there is no sinne in it: seeing they vse good words, whereof there followeth a very good effect; namely, good health for the most part restored to the sicke.

Mat. The diuell vseth to assaile men, disguised: that is to say, he changeth himselfe into an Angel of light; to the end he may be the better welcome. For he knoweth, that if he were descried, all would abhorre him. Therefore he can finde no better colour, than if he make shew of the word of God: which neuertheles, is both corrupted by him, and

2. Cor. 11. 14.

wrested

wreſted from the true meaning; as hee doth with heretickes: or elſe it is turned from the right and lawfull vſe (namely, doctrine, reproofe, correction, and inſtruction) to the healing of bodies, and ſuch other deluſions; whereby both it is prophaned, and the name of God taken in vaine. Whereupon it is plaine, that the cures, which ſometimes enſue vpon thoſe deceits and iuglings, be not of God (againſt whome there is that way great ſin committed,) but from the diuell.

Theoph. Canſt thou prooue, that thoſe kinds of healings or cure, be of the diuell?

Mat. Yea indeed, and that moſt eaſily. For God vſeth onely two waies to the curing of diſeaſes: whereof one is naturall & ordinary; namely, by the helpe of medicines, whereinto he hath put that vertue and force: the other is beſides the courſe of nature, by miracle; which is when God himſelfe doth it, by his owne power. But, that way of healing, by rehearſing words out of the holy Scriptures, cannot be called ordinary or naturall; foraſmuch as the word of God is not giuen to heale bodies, but ſoules. Neither can it be reckned among the miracles, which proceed from the power of God. For, the power of God is not tied to the vttering of certaine words, be they neuer ſo good or excellent: otherwiſe there were no man, that might not do miracles at his pleaſure; which, in very deed, is moſt abſurd For thereupon it ſhould follow, that God declareth his power, not according to his owne will, but according to our pleaſure. Therefore no man ought to doubt, but that theſe kinds of healings be of the diuell, and not of God.

Theoph. They obiect, that it is not likely, that the diuell (the enemy of mankinde) ſhould regard and care for the good health of men.

Mat. That which treachers and poyſoners are wont to doe (namely, to flatter thee for a time, to the end they may afterward lay hands vpon thee the more eaſily) the ſame vſeth the diuell. For, if he heale the diſeaſes of cattell, hee doth it with no other minde, but to binde the owners of them to himſelfe. If he bring any eaſe to our bodies, hee doth it to bring the ſoule in bondage to himſelfe, & (conſequently) that, at length hee may throw downe body and

soule into hell, where he is. Finally, he doth alwaies vsurp dominion and Lordship ouer them, to whom he maketh shew of seruice for a time.

Theoph. It were therefore better for a man to serue himselfe, than to haue such a seruant.

Mat. It were so, and indeed, to be holden with sickenesse all the time of our life, rather than to recouer our health by his helpe.

Theoph. I will yet demand one thing. Whence hath the diuell this power, that hee can heale the diseases of our body?

Mat. God permitteth it vnto him by his iust iudgement, as it hath beene already said; that they might more and more be blinded, which flie to the diuell: that so by their owne desert, they may perish in their errors.

Theoph. The third maner of taking Gods name in vaine is behind.

Gods name taken in vain by dissolutenesse of life.

Mat. It is, when a man professeth himselfe to know God, but denieth him in his deeds: that is, whose whole life yeeldeth nothing but offentes, and stumbling blockes. Of such the Prophet maketh mention: for thus the Lord chideth with them; Why doest thou declare my statutes, and takest my Law in thy mouth? seeing thou hatest to be reformed, and hast cast my words behind thee. The same also is to be thought of hypocrites; which are farre worse than these. For, in words, and outward deeds, they doe vainely make shew of the feare of God: but their heart is very far off from him. In this number also they may bee reputed, whose minde wandreth about other matters, while they are praying.

Psal. 50. 16.

Theoph. Let vs come to the fourth manner of taking Gods name in vaine.

When we speake of God without consideratiō.

Mat. When this word GOD, or the name of IESVS, is vsed of vs either rashly, or without cause, as many doe: with whom it is ordinary, that, in the way of maruelling or wondring, they often vse these speeches, MY GOD! IESVS!

Theoph. But thou shalt hardly perswade these, that they take the name of God in vaine; although it be often vsed of them. For they say; It is better to name God than the Diuell.

Mat.

Mat. Our nature is ſo corrupt, and ſo vſed to ſinne, that wee ſee not any but the greateſt: which, indeed if they be weighed by our iudgement, ſhall bee taken for very ſmall. For this cauſe, God gaue vnto vs his Law: which is as it were a glaſſe, & a moſt perfect paterne of holineſſe; that, by comparing our actions with it, we might acknowledge our ſins, and ſtudie to amend. But, of theſe things ſhall be ſpoken more at large, when we come to the vſe of the Law.

Now we are to examine that fourth manner of breaking this law, by comparing it with the commandement it ſelfe; THOV SHALT NOT TAKE THE NAME OF THE LORD THY GOD IN VAINE.

What is this, IN VAINE? Doe we then only ſinne againſt Gods name, when we aſſaile and ſet vpon it with blaſphemies and renouncing of it? No, at no hand; but euen then alſo, when it is named either contemptuouſly or raſhly. But who is he, that (being in his right mind) ſeeth not, that it is both contemptuouſly and raſhly vſed in theſe formes of ſpeech? If one haue been at a feaſt (which peraduenture hath not beene without riot and other ſinnes) hee will not feare to vtter theſe words, according to the cuſtome among vs; O my God, how exceſſiuely haue wee laughed! O my God, how richly and daintily were we entertained!

If any of our ſeruants diſquiet vs, by their vnskilfulneſſe or ſlowneſſe, ſtraightway he ſhall heare,

O God, how fooliſh thou art!

O God, how ſlow thou art!

If wee finde any place filthy and vncleane, or if we ſmell any ill ſauour, by and by ſhall the name of God be mingled with theſe things, in theſe words;

O God what a filthy place!

O God, what an ill ſauour doe I ſmell!

Theſe examples, moſt common among our countrimen, were to be remembred; that we might ſo much the more plainely ſhew, how common a thing it is with vs, to vſe the name of God contemptuouſly, and vnaduiſedly. A certain Ancient left it written, that if we haue a coſtly garment, we do then onely put it on, when we go to the company of great perſonages, and doe moſt carefully looke into it that it be not ſpotted: Inſomuch that we ſhun and

auoid all such things as might foile it. But, the most holy name of God (with the excellency and worthinesse whereof no garment, no nor any creature is indeede to be compared) is so little esteemed of vs, that it is continually mixed with vaine idle speeches, railings, and filthinesse.

Theoph. I doe acknowledge, that the name of God is abused with very great contempt, in the speeches which thou hast reckoned vp: but, that sin is so common, that in very deede the godly themselues, and such as desire to reforme their liues, be not free from it. For, a man shall finde very few that sinne not in this point.

Mat. The cause why I haue handled that sinne the more largely, was, that it may the better be knowne: especially to such as be touched with any feare of God; that by the reuerence, wherewith they honour his name, they may be mooued to amendment: Which they shall with very small labour attaine, if they giue their mindes vnto it.

Theoph. Let vs come to the fifth and last way, whereby the name of God is taken in vaine.

Of a vaine oath.

Mat. That is, when a man sweareth vainly.

Of an oath.

Theoph. Before I demand how any sweareth by the name of God vainly, I wold haue thee to declare what an oth is.

Mat. It is the calling of God to witnesse, for the confirmation of the vnknowne truth of our speech.

Theoph. How many kindes of oaths be there?

Mat. Two. For, the one is of things past, the other of things to come; namely when any thing is promised with an oath: which promise, if it be made vnto God, is called a vow.

Theoph. Let vs consider how a man sweareth by the name of God, in vaine.

Mat. That is, as often as those circumstances, which are required in an oath, are not kept.

Theoph. How many are those circumstances?

Mat. In an oath concerning things past, there are but three; without which, the oath shall be altogether vaine.

1. The first is, that the thing, which wee are ready to sweare, be not onely true; but also that the truth of it bee certainely knowen to vs.

2. Secondly, that it be of some importance, either in respect

reſpect of Gods glory, or the good of our neighbour.

3. The third is, that the truth of that thing, by no other meanes can be brought to light: for, otherwiſe, the name of God is contemptuouſly vſed.

But, as an oath reſpecteth things to come, there be fiue things to be obſerued.

1. Firſt, that the thing be of ſome importance.

2. That it be iuſt and lawfull.

3. That it be in our power.

4. That we be ready to performe it.

5. Finally, that when time is, we performe it indeede; although it ſhould be to our loſſe: as we be taught of the Prophet. Pſal. 15. 4.

Theoph. What if all theſe circumſtances be not obſerued, is not the name of God taken in vaine?

Mat. It is: and herein hee is greatly reproched; eſpecially, if that whereof we ſweare be not true. For then hee, that ſo ſweareth, doth put a lie and an vntruth vpon God; and conſequently (ſo much as in him lieth) doth take from him his Godhead, and maketh him like the diuell, who is the father of lies. Ioh. 8. 44.

Theop. But if we haue taken our oath to do ſome ill thing (as for example, to kill) are we bound to performe that?

Mat. At no hand. For, in our Baptiſme, we vowed vnto God, that we would ſerue him, and obey his will. And that oath cutteth off all other contrary to it.

Sinne therefore is committed in that an vnlawfull oath was taken vainely and raſhly, and contrary to the will of God; howbeit, it were far more hainous to keepe this oath. But if we be not bound to doe ill things, albeit wee haue expreſly promiſed them; much leſſe if they be required of vs, vnder the colour of ſome generall promiſe. For ſecretly they be excepted which are not lawfull; no leſſe than thoſe which be impoſſible, or cannot be done. And therefore HEROD was not bound to cut off the head of IOHN BAPTIST, by his oath taken to HERODIAS. Math. 14. 7.

Theop. We haue ſpoken ſufficiently of the firſt part of this cõmandement: let vs come to the other. Now, that pertaineth to the ſactifying of Gods name. By what means therfore may the name of God be ſanctified or hallowed of vs? The ſecond part of the third commandement of ſanctifying Gods name.

Mat. By fiue; euen the ſame number with thoſe, whereby it is taken in vaine.

Theoph. Declare ſeuerally euery of theſe.

Mat. The firſt is, that we ſing his praiſes, reade his word, and ſpeake reuerently of him.

2. The other is, that in aduerſitie he be praiſed of vs, both in heart and mouth: as we reade Iob did, in theſe words, LET THE NAME OF GOD BE BLESSED. Iob 1.21.

3. The third is, that ſo often as neede ſhall require, wee doe make a moſt franke confeſſion of his truth; and leade a life agreeable to that confeſſion.

4. The fourth is, that we pray vnto him, and from our heart giue him thanks.

5. The fift, that, when it ſhall be neceſſary, wee ſweare by his name.

Theoph. How is the name of God ſanctified, when wee ſweare by it?

Mat. Becauſe, by an oath lawfully taken, hee is acknowledged of vs for the true God: foraſmuch as wee confeſſe him to bee the ſearcher of the heart and ſecret thoughts, when wee call him to bee a witneſſe of the things that bee hidden from men.

Secondly, becauſe we flie to him as a moſt earneſt defender of truth; and therefore a moſt ſeuere reuenger of lyers, and ſuch as forſweare themſelues. And theſe indeed be the proper offices of God alone.

Finally, by an oath his name is ſanctified: ſeeing that by it, controuerſies, which hurt Chriſtian charitie, bee ended, as the Apoſtle ſpeaketh. Heb. 6 16.

Againſt Anabaptiſts, that wholly condemne ſwearing.

From whence wee may gather, how wonderfull the kindneſſe of God is toward vs: who doth ſo farre abaſe himſelfe, that he will be preſent at our controuerſies, and make an end of them. Therefore there is no cauſe why wee ſhould doubt to ſweare by his name, in the place of iudgement, or elſewhere; ſo as all the conditions be kept. For whoſoeuer refuſeth to ſweare, refuſeth to giue glorie vnto God.

Theoph. But Chriſt commandeth that wee ſweare not at all, neither by the heauen, nor by the earth; and that our communication be yea, yea, nay, nay: affirming further Math. 5. 34.

that

that whatsoeuer is more, is of euill, which also is confirmed by Saint IAMES. Deut. 7. 22.

Mat. That indeed is true. But Christ in the same Chapter, plainly saith, That he came not to destroy the Law or the Prophets, but to fulfill them. Therefore his purpose is not to condemne the right vse of an oath, expresly commaded of God in these words of MOSES; Thou shalt feare the Lord thy God, and shalt serue him only, and sweare by his name. Deut. 6. 13.

Theoph. With what minde therefore, did Christ vtterly forbid sweating?

Mat. With a purpose to restore to this commandement the true vnderstanding of it; which had beene much corrupted by the false glosses of the Scribes and Pharisies. For they taught it was no sinne, when any sware in vaine by the creatures (as by heauen and earth); seeing that the name of God was not expressed. But Christ meaneth to shew that although the name of God was suppressed, or not mentioned, yet secretly it was sufficiently expressed in such oaths, and that therefore therein sinne was committed against this commandement. Therefore his purpose is not to forbid the lawfull vse of an oath, but the abuses: as when a man sweareth vainely, by what name or in what manner soeuer it be done.

Theoph. It followeth therefore, that it is lawfull to sweare by creatures; so as it be not vainly: forasmuch as the name of God is secretly vnderstood in them.

Mat. Yea verily: yet with this condition, that those creatures be auoided in swearing, which haue beene commonly abused to idolatry. For then the name of God is not vnderstood vnder them, but it is euen suppressed that they may haue his roome, the honour being giuen vnto them which belongeth to the maiestie of God alone. But this doe they, which sweare by the names of Saints departed. In which respect the Lord is bitterly angry with them that sweare by other gods, and taketh that kinde of swearing to be an argument of manifest falling away from him. Whereupon he complaineth of the Israelites in IEREMY, in these words: Thy children haue forsaken mee, and sworne by those which are not gods. And that indeede very iustly: Ier. 5. 7.

Thus this learned man and some other haue thought of this matter.

for

for the breaking of the second and third commandement, is a signe of breaking the first.

Theoph. How so?

Mat. Euen as he worshippeth God with spirituall worship, and sweareth by his name so oft as the Lord shall require, which spiritually hath conceiued and comprehended him in his minde: so whosoeuer hath imagined to himselfe a false God, or many gods, doth forthwith shew it by worshipping of idols, whose names hee hath in his mouth, when he sweareth. It is therefore truely said, That idols be first in the hart, before they be brought forth either with the hand or mouth.

Theoph. Let vs come to the third part of the commandement, which is the threatning against such as breake it

The third part of the third commandement.

Mat. It is contained in these words; The Lord will not hold him guiltlesse which taketh his name in vaine. Whereby it appeareth, that the transgression of this commandement is accounted a most hainous sinne before God, notwithstanding men make light of it, and that therefore hee will with grieuous punishment, be auenged vpon such as be guilty of it.

Theoph. Is there any thing that doth so much aggrauate this sinne?

Mat. Yea verily, For there is no commandement, in the breaking wherof there is seene such insolent contempt of God.

Theoph. Why so?

Mat. Because wee are ledde to breake the other commandements, either vpon a false opinion of worshipping God, as when we giue our selues to idolatry and superstition; or for our owne estimation, when we yeeld our selues to reuenge; or for our pleasure, when wee commit fornication; or for our profit, when wee steale; or for some feare, as when wee tell a lie: but for the breaking of this commandement, we can pretend neither the worshipping of God, nor our profit, nor our pleasure, neither any feare. Therefore the transgression of this commandement, and especially blasphemy, hath no other beginning, but a most manifest contempt of Gods maiestie.

Theoph. Some are wont to excuse the matter by custome

to

to cleare themselues of the sinne of the contempt of God.

Mat. But I would demand, whence that custome sprung: Did it not come from the very impiety and mad contempt of God, wherewith our mindes were wholly taken vp and possessed before? For it is certaine, when at the first the minde of man is lightned with the least Sun-beame of the feare of God, that, that bad custome is presently changed, howsoeuer it might goe about to defend it selfe by prescription of very long time.

The fourth commandement.

Remember the Sabbath day, to keepe it holy; six daies shalt thou labour, and doe all thy worke, but the seuenth day shall be the Sabbath to the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt doe no manner of worke, thou, nor thy sonne, nor thy daughter, thy man-seruant, nor thy maid-seruant, nor thy cattell, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; for in six daies the Lord made the heauen and the earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seuenth day; wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.

Theoph. The fourth commandement of this first Table is behinde: to the exposition whereof, that we may make an easier way, let vs see of how many parts it standeth.

Mat. Of foure.

1. The first containeth the summe of the whole commandement in these words; Remember the Sabbath day, to keepe it holy.

2. The second sheweth, which that Sabbath day is, when he saith: Six daies shalt thou labour, and doe all thy worke: but vpon the seauenth day, shall be the Sabbath to the Lord thy God.

3. The third teacheth, how that day is to be kept holy. Thou shalt doe no worke, neither thou, nor thy sonne, nor thy daughter, nor thy man-seruant, nor thy maid-seruant, nor thy cattell, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates.

4. The fourth rendreth a reason, why hee appointed the seuenth day, rather than any other day, vnto this rest: For in six daies God made the heauen and the earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seuenth day; therefore he blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.

Theoph.

Theoph. We must follow these foure parts in order. Declare therefore the meaning of the first.

Mat. When the Lord saith; Remember the Sabbath day, hee teacheth vs that this commandement is of very great waight. Which appeareth to be most true, euen by this, that the keeping of the rest of the commandements, dependeth vpon the keeping of this. In respect whereof, the Lord euery where by his Prophets obiecteth to the Israelites the transgression of this commandement, when he meaneth to signifie the breach of the whole Law. Hee addeth after; that thou sanctifie or hallow it: that is, ceasse and abstaine from bodily workes, that thou maiest applie thy selfe earnestly to spirituall and heauenly.

Theoph. Which calleſt thou heauenly & spirituall works?

Why the Lord, vnder the law, commanded the Sabbath.

Mat. That we may vnderstand that point, we must know that the Sabbath was commanded of God for two causes, the first whereof was ceremoniall. That ceremonie also is considered in two respects. For by that bodily rest, the Lord meant to warne the people of Israel, to abstaine and rest from their owne works being carnall and defiled, that they might suffer the holy Ghost to worke in them. This doth he himselfe witnesse in these words: See that you keepe my Sabbath, because it is a signe betweene mee and you, in your generations, that you may know, that it is I the Lord which sanctifie you. Out of which words it is plaine, that that ceremonie was a type or shadow of our regeneration.

Seconly, that ceremonie serued, to signifie the euerlasting rest of the kingdome of heauen, which was as it were a part of the former. For that cause the Lord calleth the land of Canaan, rest, because it was a signe or token of eternall life, according to the interpretation of the Apostle to the Hebrewes.

The other end of the bodily rest is this, that wee may wait vpon the Ministerie of the Church: for that is established by God in this commandement. Moreouer, that we may meditate vpon his workes, & diligently applie our selues to the loue of our neighbour, and the instruction of our household and familie. These are the two ends of this bodily rest: the first where of together with the rest of the ceremonies,

ceremonies, is taken away by the comming of Christ, who is the truth of it. But the other is perpetuall, and to continue for euer. Therefore that rest belongeth vnto vs, and is euery weeke to be kept one day.

Theoph. Let vs come to the other part.

Mat. After that the Lord had commanded one day for rest, then he sheweth which day he will haue kept, and that is the seauenth, namely, the last of the weeke. He doth also teach, how we should spend the rest of the weeke, namely, in working, that is, in doing our worldly businesses, to the end wee may bee the fitter for the rest of the seuenth day, and may the better performe such things as hee himselfe hath commanded.

Theoph. Which was the seuenth day?

Mat. That which we do yet call Saturday. For the Lords day properly, is the first day of the weeke, according to the distinction made by God himselfe. But the seuenth day the Apostles changed, to teach that the ceremony was abrogated, and the REST they put off to the Lords day, vpon the which Christ by his resurrection had put an end to that ceremony.

Theoph. How did Christ by his resurrection, put an end vnto that ceremony?

Mat. Because, by the vertue and power thereof, we are spiritually raised vp, that we may serue God, and mortifie our concupiscences all the daies of our life: so as, for this purpose, we do not now stand in neede of the obseruations of any day.

Theoph. Is not this to obserue daies, which thou condemnedst as a superstitious thing, in the exposition of the former commandements?

Mat. To obserue daies and times, is nothing else, but to thinke one day or time holier than another, which agreeth not to the hallowing of the Lords day. For we doe not attribute vnto it greater holinesse than to another. But when the Apostles would take away the ceremonie of the seauenth day, they appointed this, which came first in place, to that vse: and as another day had beene as fit, so neither is this lesse fit or conuenient, than any other.

Theoph. Declare the third part of the commandement.

Mat.

Mat. It teacheth that no worke concerning this life is to be done, vnlesse it be necessary, vpon that day. But it is to be marked, that such workes were then iudged to be faulty & sinfull among the Iewes, because they were contrary to the ceremonie which they were bound to keepe. But now, that ceremony being taken away; they are not forbidden as euill in themselues, but because they hinder vs, and withdraw vs from holy exercises and meditations.

Theoph. But why is there mention made of the REST of men-seruants, & of maid-seruants, of cattell, & of strangers?

Mat. Concerning men-seruants, and maid-seruants, God commaundeth this, as well that they might haue some ease from labour, as also that they might attend vpon the ministery of the Church, and so to care for and looke to their own saluation, no lesse then their maisters. The REST of beasts God doth therefore mention, because they work not but with the seruice & helpe of seruants. He speaketh also of strangers, because if they be of the same profession with vs, they also are bound to keepe the law of God: if not, yet at least, heede must be taken that they bee not an euill example to the rest.

Theoph. The fourth part is remaining.

Mat. The Lord setteth before vs his owne example, the more earnestly to pricke vs forward to the keeping of that REST. He doth also call to our remembrance the creation of the world, that we might remember of whom we haue our beginning, and the innumerable benefits that wee enioy. The Sabbath day therfore should be vnto vs as it were an image of the creation of the world: and vpon that day ought we to meditate and thinke vpon that creation, lest we be guilty of that fault, which God in former times by Moses vpbraideth the Iewes with; Thou hast forgotten that strong God which hath begotten thee, the God which made thee thou hast not remembred. Deut. 32.

Hereupon it is, that by name he reckeneth vp euery of his workes by it selfe: For in sixe daies the Lord made the heauen, and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them. But here is mention of the Lords resting, not because he hath cast off the care of his workes: for he continually worketh to preserue his creatures, and to guide them by his prouidence,

dence. But this hee would teach vs, that hee hath ceased from making of the kinds of things. Finally, the blessing and hallowing of the Sabbath day is after added, not because that day is in it selfe holier then others; but for that it is of God appointed for this purpose, that we should rest from our owne workes, and diligently giue our selues to holy workes.

Theoph. The Sabbath day therefore is sanctified of God, in that he did appoint it to holy and religious works; It is also sanctified of vs, when we giue our selues carefully to performe those workes.

Mat. It is true.

Th. But are not the rest of the daies so hallowed of God, namely, that they be appointed to holy & religious works?

Mat. Yes verily, so farre foorth indeede as may bee for our businesses. But vpon the Sabbath all other things are to be set aside, that we may diligently apply our selues to those workes. And verily men bee without excuse, except they do this. For whereas the Lord hath diuided the weeke into seuen daies, he appointed one onely for himselfe, but the other sixe hee hath left vnto vs, to looke to our owne matters.

The second Table of the Law.

Theoph. The foure commandements of the first Table being expounded, order requireth that wee come to the sixe last. But before we goe to the exposition of each by it selfe, I desire you to make a generall and briefe exposition of them, which may shew how they agree together, as you did when you handled the first Table.

Mat. As in the first Table the Lord doth teach true religion, that is, the way whereby wee may truely worship him: So in the last hee prescribeth a holy policie or gouernment vnto men, that they might keepe peace among themselues, and serue God with one minde. But for the vpholding of that policie, it is necessary that some bee superiours, and other some inferiours; and that the superiours bee armed with some authoritie, wherewith they may keepe the subiects within the bounds of their dutie, and prouide that the mightier doe no wrong to men of meane

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Mat. It teacheth that no worke concerning this life is to be done, vnlesse it be necessary, vpon that day. But it is to be marked, that such workes were then iudged to be faulty & sinfull among the Iewes, because they were contrary to the ceremonie which they were bound to keepe. But now, that ceremony being taken away; they are not forbidden as euill in themselues, but because they hinder vs, and withdraw vs from holy exercises and meditations.

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The summe of the last Table.

meane qualitie. Now all these things doth the Lord ordaine in the fifth commandement. For by little and little he doth in continuance of time bring vs to all lawfull subiection, beginning with that which is most easie to bee borne. Hauing setled and appointed Magistrates, hee doth presently adioyne lawes, by which they ought to gouerne their subiects peaceably, and keepe them in equitie and iustice: From whence also euery one should seeke the rule of loue, that they may line with their neighbours, according to the will of God.

And first, because nothing is more needfull for the safegard of humane societie, than that the life of man bee preserued; in the sixt commandement the Lord forbiddeth murther, and also commandeth that euery one preserue the life of his neighbour, no otherwise than their owne. When he hath taken order for the safegard of mens liues, because men are mortall, in the seuenth commandement, forbidding whooredome, he inioyneth marriage to all men that haue not the gift of continency, to the end mankinde may be preserued and increased. And because a family or houshold followeth marriage: to the sustaining whereof, riches are required, in the eight commandement he appointeth to euery one propriety of goods, while hee forbiddeth theft, wherewith quiet possession is disturbed and troubled; and doth also command, that we labour to get riches, both for our owne vse, and to giue to the poore. Afterward, because it cannot be (such is the desire and couetousnesse of men) that goods can be enioyed of vs, but that oftentimes there arise strifes and controuersies, which the Magistrates cannot appease, except they plainely know the truth of the matter; in the ninth commandement the Lord forbiddeth false witnesse-bearing, which is no small hinderance to the ending of controuersies, and doth command that we speake the truth, both before the Magistrate and elsewhere in all kinde of matters. Finally, because the Law-giuer is spirituall, he would teach vs that his Law also is spirituall: that is, that it requireth not onely outward obedience, as the lawes made by men doe, but euen the inward affection of the heart. Therefore vnder the name of concupiscence, which he forbiddeth in the last commandement,

dement, he requireth also this, that wee obey him with all our heart, so as there be not any thing in vs, be it neuer so little, that is contrary to his will,

The fift commandement of the Law.

Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy daies may be long in the land, which the Lord thy God giueth thee.

Theoph. Let vs goe to the particular exposition of each commandement of the last Table. And let vs begin at the fift, which is the first. These be the words of it; Honor thy father & thy mother, &c. Of how many parts standeth it?

Mat. Of two, the first is a precept, namely, that we honour father and mother: the other is a promise made to the keepers of this commandement, which is, that they shall liue long: wherein secretly is contained a threatning against such as breake it.

Theoph. That wee may clearely vnderstand the former part, two questions are to be determined of vs. First, whom God comprehendeth vnder the name of parents. And secondly, what is to be vnderstood by the name of Honour. Answer therefore to this question.

Mat. Vnder the name of parents they all bee comprehended, who by any meanes in respect of their office are bound to do the duty of parents towards vs, namely they that ought to haue care for our instruction, health, life, preseruation of our goods, credit and peace. For in these things is contained the duty of parents toward their children. Therefore vnder the name of parents, are to bee vnderstood, first

Who be comprehended vnder the name of parents.

1. Gardians and tutors, that be to vs in stead of parents.
2. Magistrates, who also be called fathers of the Countrey.
3 Ministers of the church, and Schoole-masters, which be our spirituall parents.
4. Husbands towards their wiues.
5. Masters towards their seruants.

Theoph. Wherefore did God comprehend all these about mentioned, vnder the name of parents?

Mat. Because, such is the naughtinesse and pride of mans nature, (for it is swollen with the desire of greatnesse

and dignity) that it hardly endureth to bee subiected vnto any. For this cause, that superioritie, which by nature is most amiable, and least enuied, is propounded for an example, that our high minds might the more easily bow, and be made acquainted with subiection.

What the word Honour signifieth.

Theoph. Let vs come to the other question. Wherein consisteth the honour which wee are commanded to giue to our parents?

Mat. It consisteth in three things.

1. First, in outward salutation, proceeding from the inward reuerence which wee ought to yeeld vnto them; which shall be done, if we acknowledge them to be the ministers of God for our good.

2. Secondly, in obedience, which wee yeeld to their commandements; so as they be not contrary to the will of God: for then, by the rule of PETER, wee ought to obey God rather than men.

Act. 5. 29.

3. Thirdly, that, in their pouerty we releeue thē with our wealth. And therwithal it is to be obserued, that God doth not onely prescribe a rule to inferiors, whereby they may giue due honor to their superiors, but doth also teach superiors their duty which they ought to do to their inferiors.

Theoph. What if the superiors faile in their duty, are not the inferiors discharged from the honour due to them?

Mat. No not so: for our sinnes are not excused by the sinnes of others. Moreouer, the obedience we giue them is directly referred to God, of whom it is commanded, and not properly to themselues.

Theoph. Wee haue staied long enough vpon the former part of this commandement: let vs therefore come to the other: and that is a promise, the words whereof bee these; THAT THOV MAIEST LIVE LONG IN THE LAND VVHICH THE LORD THY GOD GIVETH THEE. To the explaning whereof there be fiue things, whereof I will aske thee.

1. First; why the Lord ioyned a promise to this commandement rather than to the rest of the commandements of this latter table?

2. Why he promised long life, rather than any thing els?

3. Whether wee receiue benefite by long life, which is subiect to so many troubles?

4. What

4. What that land is, whereof mention is made in this place.

5. How is this promiſed fulfilled? ſeeing it is certaine, that ſometimes obedient children bee taken away by vntimely death, and the ſtubborne and diſobedient liue long. Now therefore anſwer to the firſt. What is the cauſe that the Lord ioyned a promiſe to this commandement?

Mat. Hee teacheth ſuperiors, by his owne example, how they ought to behaue themſelues toward their inferiours: namely, to allure them to obedience rather by gentleneſſe and promiſes, then by ſeueritie and puniſhments.

Th. Go forward, & in like ſort anſwer to the ſecond: why is long life promiſed by God, rather than any thing els?

Mat. The promiſe is very fitly applied to the commandement it ſelfe; for it teacheth good and obedient children that if they honour the inſtruments or means of this their life (namely their parents) they ſhall long enioy it. But on the contrary ſide, it threatneth death to the diſobedient; becauſe they be altogether vnworthy to haue the vſe of that benefit, the inſtruments or means whereof they honor not.

Theo. The third point followeth. What are we the better for long life, ſeeing it is ſubiect to ſo many afflictions?

Mat. I grant indeede that this corporall life, if it be ſeparated from the fauour of God, is moſt miſerable and vnhappy: But it is a bleſſing to the faithfull. For, continuing in it, we ſerue to his glory: and ſometimes he granteth vs this, that with great peace and quietneſſe we enioy ſundry temporall benefits. Moreouer, this promiſe is applied to the common opinion of men. For they account long life for a great bleſſing.

Theoph. Let vs come to the fourth point. What is that land, whereof the Lord maketh mention in this place?

Mat. In reſpect of the Iſraelites, it is to be vnderſtood of the land of Canaan; which they had receiued of the Lord, to poſſeſſe it; but in reſpect of vs, it is extended a great deale further. For, wherſoeuer we be in the world, we haue right of dwelling there, from the Lord, whoſe the earth is.

Theoph. The laſt point is behind. How this promiſe is fulfilled? ſeeing it is certaine, that oftentimes obedient and good children die young, and the diſobedient liue long.

Mat. That is proued by the examples of ABSALON, CORE, DATHAN, ABIRON, and of the ſonnes of HELY. Daily experience alſo cõfirmeth it, of ſtubborn & diſobedient children: for they be for the moſt part ſeene, either in priſons, or vpon the gallowes. Contrariwiſe, the good & obedient, the moſt part, haue long life, with great quietneſſe and peace. But, if at any time it fall out otherwiſe, we muſt remember, that all the promiſes of God concerning earthly things, be with condition, namely, ſo far forth, as he ſhall know them to be expedient, both for his own glory, & for our ſaluation. When therefore God doth betimes call his out of this life vnto himſelf, he prouideth far better for thẽ than if he gaue them long life. For, hee taketh them from the miſeries of this world, & putteth thẽ into the poſſeſſiõ of eternall life. On the other ſide, ſometimes he giueth the wicked long life; but ſo weake and full of miſery, that it is more grieuous than death it ſelfe. For this cauſe, MOSES, repeating the law of God declareth this promiſe, in theſe words: THAT IT MAY BE VVELL VVITH THEE IN THE LAND VVHICH, &c. But, if it fall out otherwiſe, it is for the cauſe which was at large ſet forth by vs, when wee entreated of afflictions. For in that place we taught, wherefore the Lord will haue the wicked ſometimes to liue long & happily in this world, & the godly to ſuffer all kinde of afflictions. Notwithſtanding, that ſaying of SALOMON abideth true; ALTHOVGH THE SINNER COMMIT EVILL AN HVNDRED TIMES, AND GOD PROLONGETH HIS DAIER, YET I KNOVV THAT IT SHALL BE VVELL VVITH THEM THAT FEARE THE LORD.

Deut. 6. 2.

Eccl. 8. 12.

The ſixt Commandement.

Thou ſhalt not kill.

Theoph. Hauing finiſhed the treatiſe of the fift commandement, wee are to come to the ſixt. How many parts bee thereof it?

Mat. Two.

1. Firſt, the forbidding of murther.

2. The commanding of keeping peace and friendſhip with our neighbours.

The expoſition of the firſt part.

Theoph. How large is the word killing?

Mat. It containeth all the degrees and ſteppes by the which

which we come to it: yea, indeed, all those things, whereby we are brought and stirred to commit murther, according to the third rule.

Theoph. Rehearse those steps or degrees.

Mat. They be three. The first whereof is hatred conceiued in the heart: forasmuch as it is in plaine words forbidden of MOSES; THOV SHALT NOT HATE THY BROTHE IN THY HEART. Leu.19.17.

Theoph. What if our enemie be a wicked man, is it not lawfull to hate him?

Mat. We may indeed hate his sins; but not his person. But we must diligently beware of two extremities, wherein we doe sinne on either side.

The first is, that we hate not the person, for his sinne.

The other, that we loue not the sin, for the persons sake.

Theoph. Let vs come to the second degree, by the which we come to murther.

Mat. It is anger: for it is a declaration of the hatred lying in the heart.

Theoph. Doe you thinke it altogether vnlawfull to bee angry with any?

Mat. I doe not thinke so. For, anger is a naturall affection: wherein if moderation be kept, it deserueth as much praise, as the two extremities deserue dispraise.

Theoph. What is that moderation?

Mat. When with zeale for the glory of God, or with iust sorrow, wee be angry, because iniurie is done vnto vs without our desert; and that, keeping a mean, and with this caution, that we neither speake nor doe any thing that is against the honor of God, christian modesty, and the loue of our neighbour. In which sense PAVL commandeth; BE ANGRY, AND SINNE NOT. Eph.4.26.

Theoph. Let vs consider of the two extremities of anger: and first let vs speake of that which sinneth, in exceeding.

Mat. We doe then fall into it, when we be angry rathly, that is, without a lawfull cause: or else when, being mooued for a iust cause, we do passe the bounds of moderation, of speaking or doing the things that be against the honour of God, neighbourly charity, and christian modestie. But that falleth out, when we be so possessed with that affecti-

on, that the iudgment is troubled, & reason it selfe is darkened; for then for a time, wee are like vnto mad men that
Iam.1.20. know not what they do. For this cause IAMES saith; The wrath of man performeth not the righteousnesse of God.

Theoph. Let vs come to the other extremitie. How doe we sinne in the defect or want of anger?

Mat. When, perceiuing that God is offended, or our credit hurt without cause, we are notwithstanding not mooued, as our dutie requireth: which would haue vs not to suffer euils; but that according to our callings we should set our selues against them. Hence it was that MOSES was so angry in the wildernes with the Israelites, whom he saw worshipping the golden Calfe with idolatrous worship; IOHN BAPTIST with the Scribes and Pharises, and IACOB with his father in law, LABAN. MOSES indeed, being mooued with most iust anger, drew out the sword, because he was a magistrate. IOHN vsed most sharpe and vehement reprehensions, because he was a minister of Gods word, and had to do with Hypocrites, and men hardned in their sins. IACOB dealeth with moderate & gentle admonitions, because he was a priuate person, and his owne matter was in question.

Theoph. The third step, by the which men come to murther is behinde.

Mat. It is euery hurt offered to the person of our neighbour: whereupon also sometimes ensueth murther it selfe, which fault is indeed most grieuous in the sight of God. As appeareth by that which the Lord saith, that he abhorreth the manslaier; and by the penaltie, appointed by himselfe vnto men-killers. For he ordained, that not only men, but also the very brute beasts that had slaine man, should bee
Leuit. 17. 26. put to death. For which cause he forbad his people the eating of blood. For, by that ceremony, he would shew, how much he abhorred the shedding of blood, and consequently murther.

Theoph. Is there any speciall cause, which maketh murther to be esteemed so hainous a sin before God?

Mat. There is: and he doth declare it himselfe in the ninth chapter of GENESIS. For, after these words, WHO SO SHEDDETH MANS BLOOD, BY MAN HIS BLOOD SHALL BE SHED

pre-

presently he addeth, BECAVSE IN THE IMAGE OF GOD MADE HE MAN. By which words he teacheth, that his owne Image which he hath engrauen in man, is wronged and misused by man-slaughter.

Theoph. But whether was that image, or likenesse of God, blotted out in man by originall sinne, as it hath beene said by thee in the second Chapter of the former booke?

Mat. It was indeed: but not so far, that there be no steps of it at all remaining. For the spirituall gifts (as one of the Ancients saith) giuen of God to men for their saluation, were by originall sinne taken away; such as bee the true knowledge of his maiesty, and of the worship due vnto him: But the naturall gifts, that is, such as concerne this life, were onely corrupted, as vnderstanding and reason, so far forth as they respect humane things; but they were not altogether taken away, as experience it selfe doth sufficiently witnesse.

Theoph. Let vs come to the other part of this commandement: and withall let vs consider of the vertues which are commanded in it.

Mat. The meaning thereof is this: that wee be meeke, louing peace, and concord, gentle, peace-makers, and desirous of reconciliation. Briefly, in this commandement, God requireth foure things of vs: the first two whereof doe shew what is to be auoided; and the latter two, what is to be done of vs, to the fulfilling of it.

Theoph. Rehearse the first two.

Mat. That we hate no man; much lesse that we hurt either by words or deede. Secondly, that, if we be offended, we follow the counsell of PAVL, that we auenge not our selues: but suffer the iniury patiently, leauing vengeance vnto God, who claimeth it to himselfe; VENGEANCE IS MINE, I VVIL REPAY IT. For this cause also, in another place he is called the God of vengeance, or God the auenger. Rom. 12. 19. Psal. 94. 1.

Theoph. But, while we beare iniuries patiently, doe we not giue our enemies occasion to be more cruell and fierce vpon vs? according to our manner of speech; that wolues be more fierce vpon such as play the sheepe.

Mat. It is indeede certaine, that our enemie sometimes waxeth prouder, and more insolent, because of our meeke-

neſſe: but this is nothing to the matter. For we ought to be ready rather to beare diuers iniuries, than to reuenge that which we haue receiued; and that by the commandement of Chriſt: RESIST NOT EVIL: BVT VVHO SO SHAL STRIKE THEE ON THY RIGHT CHEEKE, TVRNE TO HIM THE OTHER ALSO. And this is the true ſenſe of that place. For, the Lord would not haue vs when wee haue receiued one iniurie, to pull another vpon our ſelues; as the words at the firſt ſight ſeeme to require. For it were a ſinne, not to take heede of an iniurie foreſeene, eſpecially when opportunity is offred vs. For, Chriſt himſelfe, & after him PAVL, when they were ſtricken vpon the cheeke, did not turne the other; but did greatly finde fault and complaine of the iniurie done vnto them. But concerning that Prouerbe, that THE VVOLVES BE FIERCE VPON SVCH AS PLAY THE SHEEPE, it is a very deuice of the diuell, and therefore moſt falſe. For, whoſoeuer in that behalfe doth imitate ſheepe, is ſafe from the aſſaults of all wolues, being protected by the crooke or ſtaffe of that chiefe ſhepheard of our ſoules. But on the contrary ſide, whoſoeuer, reuenging his iniuries, imitateth the wolues, hee goeth out of the fold of Chriſt (into which they onely be admitted, that be indeed ſheep) and offereth himſelfe a prey vnto Sathan, of whom PETER ſaith, He goeth about like a roaring Lyon, ſeeking whome to deuoure.

Math. 5. 39.

1. Pet. 5 8.

Why God claimes vengeance to himſelfe.

Theoph. Why doth the Lord challenge to himſelfe the office of reuenging, and ſo earneſtly forbiddeth vs, that we reuenge not?

Mat. It ſeemeth to be for three cauſes: the firſt, becauſe he himſelfe is ſpecially offended with the iniury done vnto vs.

Theoph. Why ſo?

Mat. Becauſe, beeing our chiefe Lord, he ought much more to be reuerenced of vs, than man which is his creature. As often therefore as we deſpiſe and breake his commandements, doing iniury vnto any, is not the offence eſpecially done againſt God?

Theoph. Declare another cauſe.

Mat. Becauſe hee doth a great deale better know the greatnes of the iniury, than doth hee that is iniured: for he pierceth into the hidden & moſt ſecret thoughts of men.

Theoph.

Theoph. Declare the laſt cauſe.

Mat. Becauſe hee hath the chiefe power to reuenge injuries, as he ſhall know to be right & expedient, which we cannot do. For he ſometime increaſeth the iniurie, which thought to haue reuenged it. But although wee had that power in our ſelues, the affections that rule vs, would carrie vs beyond the bounds of moderation. For theſe cauſes hath the Lord challenged vengeance to himſelfe, and promiſed that he will indeed repay it; and ſo hee hath freed vs from that labour, and thoſe diſcommodities, which might hurt vs in reuenging. But that hee might take from vs all excuſe, hee hath appointed the Magiſtrate, which in his name ſhould execute vengeance, and hath for this purpoſe armed him with ſtrength and authority, that with a ſtaied mind hee ſhould conſider the greatneſſe of the offience, to puniſh it without any troublous paſſion, and repreſſe the boldneſſe of thoſe which haue hurt vs.

Theoph. Is it therefore lawfull to flie to the Magiſtrate, and to purſue the puniſhment of them which haue hurt vs?

Mat. It is lawfull: for, we ſeeme after a ſort to flie to God himſelfe, when we craue the helpe of his miniſters, ſo as it be done without any affection of reuenge, hauing this onely in our minds, to helpe forward common peace, while we call thoſe to puniſhment, of whom it was diſturbed and broken.

Theoph. What if the Magiſtrate refuſe to helpe, or if wee cannot goe to him, what thinkeſt thou is then to be done?

Mat. The whole matter muſt be committed to God, which one day will take vengeance, both vpon him that hath done vs the wrong, and alſo vpon the Magiſtrate, which in this behalfe hath failed in his dutie. And indeed, this is the beſt way: for if wee our ſelues will reuenge when we be able, we ſhall do farre more hurt to our ſelues than to our aduerſarie. For we ſhall hurt but the goods, or the body of our enemies: but we ſhall ſo hurt our conſcience, that wee bring our owne ſoule into extreame hazard of vtter periſhing. I omit the diſcommodities that commonly ariſe of it, while the Magiſtrate demandeth an account of the fact. Therefore, the beſt is to beare iniuries patiently; for by that meanes we do not onely turne away

from

from our ſelues many inconueniences, and innumerable troubles and dangers; but alſo the Lord, to whom our moderation & obedience is ſeene, beſtoweth his fauour & all kind of bleſſings vpon vs. And yet the reuenge that is deferred, is not taken away: for the Lord will repay it farre more grieuously, than if we our ſelues had aſſaid to doe it.

Theoph. It is therefore monſter-like, that men be ſo deſirous of reuenge, and that there be ſo few, which in this behalfe ſuffer themſelues to obey God.

Mat. It is indeed: and thereby it appeareth that wee bee the children of ADAM, and heires of ſinne, while we doubt not to make our ſelues equall with God.

Theoph. Wherefore?

Mat. Becauſe the Lord challengeth reuenge to himſelfe alone. But there is nothing that man deſireth ſo feruently: inſomuch, as many times he offereth his owne life vnto al dangers, that in this point he may haue his deſire. Therefore, they onely that haue put off the olde ADAM, and put on the new, be able to ouercome theſe euill affections, and to leaue vengeance vnto God.

Theo. Let vs come to thoſe two laſt things, which the Lord requireth of vs to the fulfilling of this commandement. Declare the firſt.

Mat.5.23. *Mat.* That we ſhould goe to him, with whom we be at variance, to be reconciled, according to the commaundement of Chriſt: If thou bring thy gift vnto the altar, and there remẽbreſt that thy brother hath ought againſt thee, leaue thy gift there before the altar, & go thy waies, firſt be reconciled to thy brother, and then come to offer thy gift. Now hee teacheth by that ceremonie of the Law, which was then in vſe, that all the worſhip which wee offer vnto God, is diſpleaſing vnto him, ſo long as wee be at variance with our neighbours.

Moreouer, PAVL warneth, that this reconciliation bee ſoone made, and that it be not put off from day to day. For he ſaith: Let not the Sunne goe downe vpon your wrath. Which indeed is the moſt fit remedy to breake off hatred, & to bridle reuenge. For euen as diſeaſes and ſores at the firſt, being eaſie to be cured, by delay are made incureable, (& that more is) deadly: ſo hatred will grow paſt cure, if

thou

thou repreſſe it not ſpeedily. For this cauſe PAVL after theſe words, Let not the Sunne goe downe vpon your wrath, by and by addeth, Neither giue place to the diuell.

Theoph. Wherefore doth he adde theſe words?

Ma. Becauſe hatred, if it be neuer ſo little a time hidden in our mindes, maketh an entrance for the diuell, who hauing entred vpon our hearts, doth ſo wholly poſſeſſe them, that refuſing reconciliation, he ſtirreth vs vp to the deſire of reuenge, till at length hee hath throwne vs headlong to deſtruction.

Seeing therefore hee is ſo hurtfull a gueſt, there is cauſe that betimes we ſhut the doores againſt him, by vnfaind reconciliation to our brother.

Theoph. There is yet remaining another point concerning thoſe things which we are bound to doe for the fulfilling of this commandement.

Ma. This it is: After we haue diligently done our duty, if our aduerſarie doe obſtinately refuſe reconciliation, wee leaue not off to loue him, to pray vnto God for him, and in all things to pleaſure him, according to the commandement of Chriſt; Loue your enemies, bleſſe thoſe that curſe you, doe good vnto them that hate you, and pray for them that hurt you and perſecute you, that you may be the children of your father that is in heauen. Mat. 5. 44.

Hither alſo may bee referred the exhortation of PAVL; If thine enemy hunger, giue him meat, if he thirſt, giue him drinke For if thou doe this, thou ſhalt heape coales of fire vpon his head. Rom. 12. 20. 21.

Finally, that alſo is to be marked, which PAVL preſently addeth; Be not ouercome of that which is euill, but ouercome euill with good.

The ſeuenth commandement.

Thou ſhalt not commit adulterie.

Theoph. Let vs come to the ſeuenth commandement of the Law. How many parts be there of it?

Ma. Two. In the firſt he forbiddeth adulterie, in the laſt he commandeth chaſtitie.

Theoph. What doth the Lord vnderſtand by the name of adulterie?

Ma. Not onely the company of man with woman out of

The exposition of the first part.

of mariage, but also all kinde of filthinesse, by the which man may be defiled. Moreouer, all the affections of concupiscence; and finally whatsoeuer stirreth vp vnto lust, and nourisheth it. Of which sort are

Vnlawfull touchings.

Wanton apparelling of the body.

Filthy speech.

Vncleane songs.

Filthy reading.

Too familiar companie with those, who it is very like be led with lust.

Wanton lookes.

Idlenesse, that is the mother of all vices, and namely of whoredome.

Dancings, which are most manifest stirrers, and prouokers of lust.

Seeing therefore it is certaine (according to the saying; He that loueth danger shall perish in it) that wee are by nature prone vnto lust; except we diligently take heed of all those prouocations, it will verily come to passe, that at length we shall be driuen to the very act it selfe: which sin notwithstanding is before God esteemed most hainous, especially in those that professe the name of Christ.

Eccles. 3. 17.

Theoph. Why so?

Mat. PAVL giueth a reason in these words; Doe you not know that your bodies are the members of Christ? Shall I therfore take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid. Know you not, that he which is coupled with an harlot, is one bodie with the harlot? For he saith, they which were two shall be one flesh. But he which is ioyned to the Lord, is one spirit. Flie fornication; euery sinne that a man doth is without the body: but he that committeth fornication, sinneth against his owne body.

1 Cor. 6. 15.

But if the iniury be great that is done vnto Christ, verily that must not be thought little that is done to our neighbour. For there followeth vpon this the staine of honest families. Moreouer, maidens, otherwise to haue beene well bestowed, are thus not seldome brought to an hainous offence, to their dishonour and punishment. But the iniury

shall

ſhall be greateſt, if adultery be committed, that is, if either the man or the woman, or both of them be married. For ſo the faith of marriage is ſtained, and the band broken: the whole family is ouerthrowen, and ſometimes baſtards bee ſuborned for lawfull children, vnto whom the inheritance commeth. For this cauſe the Lord ordained in the Law that the adulterer ſhould die the death. Leuit. 20. 10. Deut. 22. 22.

Theoph. Let vs come to the other part of this commandement. Is there any other thing to be obſerued in it, beſides the chaſtity which we ought to keepe? The expoſition of the ſecond part.

Mat. There is. Namely, that God commandeth marriage to al thoſe, that are not euen inwardly endued with the gift of continency. For as PAVL ſaith, It is better to marry than to burne. 1 Cor. 7. 9.

Theoph. Seeing you haue made mention of marriage, I would haue you ſhew the cauſes, why it was ordained.

Mat. They be three.

1. Firſt, procreation of children.
2. Mutuall helpe one of another.
3. The auoiding of fornication.

Theoph. Which is the chiefeſt of theſe cauſes?

Mat. The firſt, in reſpect of God, namely the increaſe of mankinde: but in reſpect of vs; the laſt, namely the auoiding of fornication.

Theoph. Why ſaieſt thou, that this is the chiefe in reſpect of vs?

Mat. Becauſe it laieth vpon vs a neceſſity of marrying, which the other two do not. For this cauſe PAVL ſaith; For the auoiding of fornication, let euery man haue his owne wife, & let euery woman haue her own husband. Howbeit if he ſpeaketh to thoſe that haue not the gift of continencie, whom he expreſſely commandeth in thoſe words to marry. Notwithſtanding, heed muſt be taken that we defile not ſo holy an ordinance, by diſſolute wantonnes. Of the which thing we are warned by the Apoſtle, when he ſaith, Mariage is honourable amongſt all, and the beſt vndefiled.

Theoph. What noteth he in this teſtimony?

Mat. We are by it admoniſhed, that although the Lord hath ordained marriage to bee a remedy againſt our infirmitie, it may not therefore bee abuſed to vnbridled pleaſures,

sures, forasmuch as the chastitie of marriage forbiddeth it. For if the honesty of marriage do hide the filthinesse of incontinency, it must not therefore be continually a stirring vp or prouoking of it. Wherefore such as be married may not thinke all things lawfull for them according to the lust of the flesh; but let them carry themselues modestly one towards another in the feare of the Lord, so dealing, that they do not any thing at all vnbeseeming the honesty and temperance of marriage: Wherefore also PAVL warneth vs saying: Let euery of you know to possesse his vessell with
1 Thess. 4. holinesse and honour, not in the lust of concupiscence, as the Gentiles which know not God.

The eight Commandement.

Thou shalt not steale.

Theoph. How many parts bee there of this eight commandement?

Mat. Two. The first, the forbiding of theft: the other a commandement contrarie to the prohibition, namely, that we labour to defend and help forward the profits and commodities of our neighbour, euen as our owne; and to helpe the necessity of others.

Theoph. VVhat doth the Lord comprehend vnder the name of theft?

Mat. All euill trades and deceits, by the which we hunt after other mens goods, & seeke to get them to our selues: which is vsually done fiue waies.

1. First, by sacriledge, when a man taketh to himselfe the goods dedicated to God.

2. Secondly, by robbery, when any getteth to himselfe any thing of another mans, by open or secret force.

3. Thirdly, by fraud or legerdemaine, when any selleth counterfait wares for good: or by prating exacteth a greater price, or else deceiueth by a false measure or waight.

4. Fourthly, by vsury, when any for lending money requireth gaines more than the lawes allow, which indeede hurteth both lender and borrower, the former in his soule, the other in his goods.

Theoph. Thou dost not therefore condemne that gaine, which is taken according to the order of law.

Mat.

Mat. I condemne it not.

Theoph. But how agreeth it with the ſaying of Chriſt, Lend, looking for nothing againe? Luk.6.36.

Mat. It is to be vnderſtood of the poore, to whome if we be commanded to giue; much more to lend, looking for nothing. But when we lend to the rich, which bee able to reſtore, and that with increaſe, which alſo for the moſt part are wont to borrow to make gaine by it; I ſee not what letteth but that we may follow the law of the Magiſtrate, ſo as it be not againſt the rule of charitie. For hee that borroweth maketh more gaine of it, if he bee thrifty, than doth he that lendeth it.

Theoph. There muſt therefore reſpect be had of him that borroweth; it muſt be alſo enquired, why he doth it, and whether he be thrifty, or a riotous ſpender.

Mat. I thinke ſo: for if it be likely that he will waſtfully ſpend that he borroweth, it ought not to be lent.

Theoph. Let vs come to the fift meane, by the which a man doth vniuſtly conuey to himſelfe another mans goods.

Mat. It conſiſteth in a more hidden kinde of deceiuing, namely, when any vnder colour of law ſtealeth other mens goods: which they doe that peruert the law. But vnder theſe kinds bee comprehended the fauourers of theft, the receiuers, and all they which by any meanes giue their conſent vnto theft.

Theoph. Is nothing elſe contained vnder this prohibition?

Mat. Yes verily, namely whatſoeuer may be a prouocation to theft.

Theoph. Rehearſe them all.

Mat. Firſt of all, couetouſneſſe, that is, deſire of riches: which the Apoſtle affirmeth to be the roote of all euils, becauſe there is no wickednеſſe, bee it neuer ſo hainous, whereunto men are not driuen and brought by that wicked deſire. 1. Tim.6.10.

Secondly, prodigalitie, becauſe when a man hath waſtfully ſpent his owne goods, he is ſtirred and moued to get the goods of other men by vnlawfull meanes.

Laſt of all, idleneſſe, for by it men be brought to pouerty, by meanes wherof they fall to theft. For this cauſe PAVL warneth; Let him that ſtole, ſteale no more: But let him rather Eph.4.28.

rather worke with his hands the thing that is good, that he may giue to him that needeth.

Theoph. Now are wee come to the other part of this commandement. What is contained in it?

Mat. First, that to our power wee preserue the goods of our neighbour, which in the Scripture is called iudgement, where in many places it admoniſheth vs to doe iuſtice and iudgement. For by the name of iuſtice he vnderſtandeth this, that we giue vnto euery one his right: and by iudgement, that we giue no conſent to any iniurie done to our neighbour, but that we put it away ſo farre forth as in vs lieth.

Secondly, we be commanded to deale with our neighbours according to charitie, ſeeing God hath giuen vs goods, to be ſtewards of them, to vſe them our ſelues, ſo farre forth as neceſſity requireth, and to helpe the poore and needy. But whoſoeuer keepeth not this rule, he conueieth to himſelfe other mens goods.

Theoph. Doeſt thou thinke therefore, that they which helpe not the poore and needy, be before God accounted guilty of the ſinne of theft?

Mat. Yea verily. And indeede of a farre greater theft, than if a Bailiffe of husbandrie, ſhould refuſe to pay his Lord the fruits of his farme. For whatſoeuer goods wee haue, be the Lords, and he hath giuen them vnto vs vpon this condition, that we ſhould pay a yeerely rent, the gatherers and receiuers whereof he hath appointed the poore. Whoſoeuer therefore refuſeth, or draweth backe to helpe the poore, are guilty before God, not onely of theft, but alſo of ſacriledge: and therefore bee altogether worthie, whom he may depriue of all good things, ſeeing they doe not according to their duty acknowledge him, from whom they haue them all.

Theoph. There is therefore a great number of robbers of God.

Mat. A very great number indeed. For a man ſhall finde very few which in this behalfe doe their duty. But this ariſeth vpon a falſe opinion, wherewith rich men deceiue themſelues: namely, becauſe they imagine that all the goods they haue, whether they came by inheritance, or were

were otherwise gotten; bee so their owne, that they be wholly and altogether left to their owne will. And therefore that they be not bound to helpe such as neede, if they list not. Moreouer, couetousnesse is ioyned to this vaine imagination, which so shutteth vp in them the bowels of mercy, that they become vtterly vnmercifull. And that for the most part falleth out with them that are most wealthy. For euen as couetousnes most commonly springeth from plenty and abundance: so is it far more fitly nourished and strengthned by it, than by pouerty.

Theoph. There want not some which thinke, that these two words, MINE & THINE, breed al the stirres, wherewith the world in this part of it, is troubled at this day: and doe affirme, that things would bee best ordered, if there were such communitie of goods, as they dreame was vsed among the Christians a little after the death of Christ.

Mat. Whosoeuer goe about to defend that community, they thinke themselues to bee wiser than God himselfe, which is the author of the propriety of goods. This indeed is true, that the most part of men doe abuse it, whereupon doe rise the innumerable confusions, which euery man seeth in the world. But when we vse it as it is meete, and according to the meaning of this Commandement, it brings forth fruites most conuenient for the furthering of Christian charity, and the preseruation of humane society.

Theoph. Now describe me those that abuse the propriety of goods, against the meaning of this comandement.

Mat. They be of three kindes. In the first place they are to be put, which say; Whatsoeuer is mine, is mine: but whatsoeuer is thine, is mine. That is, mine owne is not sufficient for me, but I doe also gape for thine. And in this number they are all to be reckoned, that by any ill meanes get the goods of other men themselues.

In the second place we will set them that say; That that is mine, is mine; but that which is thine, is thine. That is, I will not conueigh thy goods to my selfe, neither also will I giue thee any part of mine. And these kind of mē refraine indeed from taking away that which is anothers, but they cannot abide to pleasure, or freely to doe good vnto any.

In the last ranke we will place them, which say; That

that is mine is thine, and that which is thine is mine. That is, I am ready to giue thee part of that I haue, but with this condition, that thou also wilt pleasure me with that which thou hast.

The first of all these therefore be further off from charity then the second, and the second further then the last, who (as it is manifest) come somewhat neerer to it.

Theoph. I see not wherein the last doe offend.

Mat. In that they giue no part of their goods, but to those of whom they looke to receiue the like, and therefore obey not Christ giuing them good counsell: When thou makest a dinner, or a supper, call not thy friends, neither thy brethren, not thy kinsfolkes, nor thy rich neighbour: least they also bid thee againe, and thou be recompenced. But when thou makest a feast, call the poore, the maimed, the lame, and the blind: and thou shalt be blessed,
Luke 14. 12. because they cannot recompence thee, for thou shalt be recompenced at the resurrection of the iust. And yet Christ doth not altogether forbid rich men to feast among themselues, or to pleasure one another, so as they haue regard of the poore, as it is meete.

Theoph. How then may these words mine and thine be lawfully vsed?

Mat. The contrarie altogether must be said vnto that, that is said of those first: namely, That which is mine is thine: but that which is thine is thine owne. That is, I am ready to make thee partaker of that I haue, although thou art not able to do the like for me.

Theoph. But if they, to whom wee communicate our goods, haue such wealth as they be able to restore them vnto vs, is it not lawfull to require them againe?

Mat. It is lawfull; so as at the first we shew that that is our meaning. For it is vnlawfull to demand that againe which was giuen. Therefore, alwaies with that caution we must require our goods againe: which we may keepe for the poore, who by their owne labor are not able to helpe their necessitie. For they that be able by labor to sustaine their life, and in the meane time become poore by idlenesse and sloth, be altogether vnworthy to be releeued: for the Apostle commandeth. If any will not worke let him not eate.

Theoph.

Theop. But how much are we bound to giue to the poore?

Mat. So much as their neceſſitie requireth: For IOHN BAPTIST goeth ſo far, that he teacheth; He that hath two coates, let him giue to him that hath none. In the which ſenſe, that cõmunitie of goods, wherof thou ſpakeſt before, is to be taken: Namely, that none of the faithfull thought any thing that he had to be his own, but did moſt liberally make all things common, ſo farre forth as the neceſſitie of the Church required it. For they ſold fields and houſes, that they might helpe the poore. This is the true meaning of that place: but we muſt not imagine any confuſion of goods, as if the faithfull had liued in common. For although I ſhould not ſay, that they could not then do it, the words of PETER to ANANIAS be againſt it; If ſo be thou hadſt kept it, did not thy field remaine to thy ſelfe? and after it was ſold, was it not in thine owne power? Luke 3. 11. Act. 4. 34.

Theoph. I confeſſe, that the communitie of goods is ſo to be taken. Howbeit ſince that time charitie hath beene very cold in the Church: for now there be none that ſell fields or houſes to giue to the poore.

Mat. Yea rather they be moſt few, that diſtribute any thing to the poore, of their yearely rents and ſuperfluities. Howbeit the cauſe that is wont to ſtay vs from liberalitie (namely the feare of pouertie, and deſire to increaſe our wealth) ought eſpecially to kindle vs vnto it, if wee beleeued the promiſes of God, by the which we are admoniſhed, that they ſhall neuer come to pouertie, that haue releeued the neceſſitie of the poore; but that ſuch as haue turned their eyes from them ſhall be full of curſes. Therefore he that with his plentie helpeth the poore, lendeth mony vnto God, who without doubt will pay it againe. Nay rather Chriſt addeth; Who ſo ſhall giue a cup of cold water to any of theſe in the name of a Diſciple, ſhall not loſe his reward. So that, of the things that we poſſeſſe, nothing may worthily be accounted our owne, but that which we giue to the poore: for, all the reſt is ſcarce ſafe, at leaſtwiſe by death we ſhall be taken away from the enioying of them. Thoſe that of charitie be beſtowed vpon the poore, are by their hands ſent vp into heauen, ſhall there be diligently kept of God, and at the laſt day ſhall be Prou. 19. 17. Math 10. 42.

restored, and that with increase, for so he hath promised.

Theoph. God therefore yeeldeth much of his own right, when he promiseth to restore vs, and that with increase, the things that haue beene giuen vnto the poore, seeing we can giue nothing, but of his owne.

Mat. Thou iudgest rightly: but this he doth to stirre vs vp to beleeue and desire of charity, whome he seeth to be very slacke and colde in it.

Theoph. What letteth, but that the Lord should giue riches vnto all? especially to the faithfull, whom he loueth and hath care of, so as one of vs might well be without the helpe of another.

Mat. The Lord will exercise the charity of the rich, and the faith and patience of the poore. Now by that inequality of goods, he preserueth the society of mankind, which indeed could not stand, if all men were alike in wealth and honour.

The ninth Commandement.

Thou shalt not beare false witnesse against thy neighbour.

Theoph. Let vs goe on to the ninth Commandement; how many parts be there of it?

Mat. Two, as of the former three: for false witnesse is forbidden, and true witnesse is commanded.

The exposition of the first part.

Theo. What doth God vnderstand by the name of false witnesse?

Mat. All the things wherewith we may hurt our neighbour with, the tongue: Howbeit, this kinde is set down for an example, according to our first rule, because wee doe most of all hurt our neighbour by false witnesse.

Theo. I would haue you recken vp all the seuerall kindes, that be contained vnder this Commandement.

Mat. We will therefore diuide them into two sorts. The one, of false witnesse that is borne in iudgement: The other, that is out of iudgement, concerning the things that we haue to doe with, in dealing with men. Touching false witnesse in iudgment, because an oath commeth between, and the matter either concerneth the life or goods of our neighbour, that wickednesse cannot be committed, but

three

three abominations come foorth at one time together; namely falſe witneſſe, periurie, theft, or murther. For this cauſe God appointed the ſame puniſhment to the falſe witneſſe, which he, againſt whom he witneſſed had deſerued, if he had beene truly accuſed. Notwithſtanding we muſt know, that there be two kinds of falſe teſtimonies in iudgement The one altogether falſe; ſuch as was that wherewith NABOTH was accuſed, that he had blaſphemed God and the king. The other falſe onely in part, and it is called a cauill or craftie accuſation, when ſomething is either taken from the truth, or put to it, or changed, as they did that teſtified againſt Chriſt, affirming that he ſaid; I can deſtroy the temple of God, and build it againe in three daies; when notwithſtanding his words were theſe: Deſtroy this temple, and in three daies I will raiſe it vp again.

Deut. 20. 19.

1. Re. 21. 13.

Math. 26. 6. Iohn 2. 19.

Of falſe witneſſe, out of iudgement,

Theoph. Now we are come to thoſe falſe teſtimonies, that are out of the place of iudgement.

Mat. There be diuers kinds of them, but we will bring them to three. And they be theſe;

1. Backbiting or ſlandering.
2. Flatterie.
3. Lying.

Theoph. Let vs therefore in the firſt place, ſpeake of backbiting. What is backbiting or ſlandering?

Backbiting

Mat. When a man diſpraiſeth, or mocketh his neighbour being abſent, and ſo empaireth his name and credit. Which is a moſt grieuous offence; for a ſlanderer hurteth three at once.

1. Himſelfe.

2. The hearer: for he is guilty of receiuing the ſlander which God hath expreſly forbidden.

3. Him that is mocked or ſlandered. Howbeit the ſlander leaſt of all hurteth him: for his name only is hurt; but the conſcience of both the former is hurt, by a ſinne committed againſt God and their neighbour.

In this ranke are to be placed whiſperers, or ſecret carrie-tales, who indeed do much aggrauate the ſin they haue committed in receiuing the ſlander, when as whiſpering or muttering it, they giue occaſion of many euils, and eſpecially, if it be amplified and enlarged of them, which moſt

commonly falleth out. For this cause SALOMON saith, Sixe
Prou. 6. 16. things the Lord hateth, but his soule abhorreth the seauenth, namely him that soweth dissension among brethren. Vnder this kinde be all those things contained, that minister occasion of euill speech, namely, an euill or false suspition of our neighbour, without an euident and iust cause giuen; for it is against christian charity, which, PAVL saith,
1. Cor 13 5. is not suspicious.

Also a rash iudgement of our neighbor, which is expresly forbidden by Christ.

Theoph. What if he, that dispraiseth or reporteth ill of his neighbour, speake the truth, may that be called backbiting or slandering?

Mat. It ought: for he sinneth in a double respect. First, his minde is estranged from the affection of christian charitie, yea rather he is mooued to that wickednesse, by a desire of speaking euil, or else, that he may get himselfe praise, by the dispraise of another. Which thing indeed appeareth euen by this, that such backbiters passe ouer all the vertues of their neighbour, but their faults they recken vp, and not seldome enlarge them.

Secondly, he obiecteth those things against his neighbor, not with a mind to amend him, neither doth he make report to them vnto such to whom it appertaineth to admonish him: but he muttereth and whispereth it to him, that cannot apply any remedie to the fault: yea rather he hath an ill opinion of his neighbour; which doth not a little hinder Christian charitie.

Flatterie. *Theoph.* Let vs come to flatterie, which thou saidest was the second kinde of false witnesse bearing, that is out of iudgement.

Mat. This vice is not so hainous as the former, for it is not so farre off from christian charitie. Moreouer, the flatterer hurteth only two, namely himselfe, and him whom he flattereth. But the backbiter, as was said, hurteth three at once. Howbeit this sin is condemned of the Lord: for the flatterer fostereth the sins of him whom he smoothly flattereth, and doubteth not to colour or paint them ouer with the name of vertue. For this cause the Prophet saith,
Isa. 5. 18. Woe vnto them that call euill good, and good euill.

Theoph.

Theoph. There is behinde, the third kinde of false witnesse out of iudgement, namely lying.

Mat. There be diuerse kinds of this sinne: for some lies proceede from coueteousnes, and they be the most hainous, because they most hurt our neighbour. Others be of infirmity and feare, such as was the lie of ABRAHAM, saying that SARAH was his sister. Others be of lightnesse for pleasures sake, which notwithstanding be sins: for Christ saith, that whatsoeuer idle word men shall speake, they shall giue account of it in the day of iudgement. Lying three kinds of it. Gen. 12. 13. and 20. 2. Math. 12. 36.

There be some other lies vnder a colour of loue, and are called officious lies, when a man by them thinketh to doe his neighbour good. Because he so deliuereth him either from imminent danger, or from losse or reproch; or else when any lyeth for his owne profit, that he may turne such discommodities from himselfe. These be the chiefe kinde of lies, vnder the which also counterfeiting and dissimulation is comprehended, when a man faineth that, that is not; as also cloaking and disguising, when a man hideth that that is indeede, to the end the contrary may appeare or seeme to be.

Theoph. Whether thinke you all kinds of lies to be sinfull and euill?

Mat. I thinke they be. For the Scripture condemneth all lying, and warneth vs to be true in all things.

Th. Is it not therefore lawfull sometimes to hide the truth?

Mat. It is not onely lawfull, but also many times expedient, in respect both of the common and priuate profit of our neighbours: Yet with this condition, that we bee not bound by oath before the Magistrate to declare it. For otherwise, it should not be lawfull for vs to conceale the truth, except the question were of the peace of the church, or the safety of our brethren. For Christian charity requireth, that we should suffer any thing, rather than bring danger to any brother, much more to the whole church.

As for example, if a man were held prisoner of enemies, he ought rather to suffer all kinds of torments, then to declare any thing that might be to the hurt of his countrey, or of his neighbour.

Theoph. The conclusion is, that thou thinkest it lawfull,

yea sometimes expedient, to conceale the truth; but that it is not lawfull to lie vpon an occasion, no not for our owne safety, or the safety of our neighbour.

Mat. I thinke so. For the glory of God, who abhorreth lies, ought to be preferred before our owne life, and the loue of our neighbour. Moreouer, the rule of charity requireth it not, that we should by a lie, hide the sinne of our neighbour, which by the commandement of God is to be punished.

Theoph. Now I see that there is no lie, that is not euil. But thinkest thou not, that it is to be accounted amongst the least sinnes?

Psal. 5. 6. *Mat.* The often vse of it, causeth that we thinke it light: but the Scripture iudgeth farre otherwise; for it saith: O Lord thou shalt destroy them that speake lies. In another place also, reckening vp the sinnes that hinder the saluation of men, it doth by name make mention of this, and numbreth it with murthers, whoredomes, and other hainous offences; for Iohn saith; The fearefull and vnbeleeuing, and murtherers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liers, shall haue their part in the lake, which burneth with fire & brimstone, which is the second death. Neither doth it that without cause: for it directly fighteth with the nature of God, which is the truth; contrariwise it agreeth with the diuell that is the father of lying. But there is no sinne whereunto we do more encline, euen from our birth. Which indeed doth sufficiently shew, that by originall sinne we haue put off the image of God, and haue put on the image of the diuell: as it hath beene declared before, namely in the chapter of Man.

Apoc. 21. 8

Theoph. Enough hath beene spoken concerning the former part of this commandement, that is, of the prohibition: it followeth therefore, that we come to the other, that is, to that that is commanded.

Mat. In it is commanded, that we helpe our neighbours, with our testimonie, if at any time neede shall so require, both publikely in the place of iudgement, and priuately without that place. Moreouer, that to our power wee defend the good name of our neighbour, that we put farre away the slander raised vp against him, at least witnesse by our

our sowre countenance, that we be not pleased with such speeches. For SALOMON saith; As the North winde driueth away the raine, so doth an angrie countenance the slanderous tongue. Prou. 25. 24.

Last of all, that in all things wee pleasure our neighbour; if hee shall stand in neede of our counsell, to comfort him in his troubles. If at any time he goe astray, moderately and by the rule of loue to admonish him, that he may be brought againe into the right way. These be the chiefe points, wherein our neighbour may be holden of vs by our speech, according to the meaning of this commandement.

Theoph. I haue nothing further to aske concerning the exposition of it. Notwithstanding before we come to the tenth commandement, wherein the inward lust or concupiscence of the minde is forbidden, I would vnderstand of thee, to what commandement the forbidding of drunkennesse and enuie is to be referred: which are two most common sinnes.

Mat. There be some sinnes, which for the diuers respect of the effects, may be referred to the forbidding of diuers commandements. Of which sort it is certaine they bee, which thou hast euen now mentioned. For, we may refer drunkennesse to the prohibition contained in the second, third, and fourth commandements of this latter Table. For it bringeth forth brawlings; which sometimes murthers and slaughters do follow. Moreouer, although drunkards abstaine from the slaughter of others, yet are they guiltie of the murther they commit against themselues, according to the prouerbe: Gluttonie slaieth more then the sword. Furthermore it stirreth vp men to lust. It also bringeth them to pouertie, which theft followeth. Adde hereunto, that whosoeuer wasteth the gifts of God so intemperately, with the want whereof many be oppressed, are in that respect holden guiltie of theft. Against drunkennesse.

Last of all, when they are heat with wine, the tongue by and by breaketh loose; and vnbridledly, by slandering and backbiting shamefully defameth the good name of our neighbour.

Theoph. Thou hast indeede reckened vp many sins that spring

spring from the abuse of a most excellent creature of God.

Mat. But by that, it appeareth, how great the corruption of man is. For, he is not onely an enemy vnto God, but also to himselfe, forasmuch as he abuseth to his owne destruction, the gift that God hath giuen him to his profit and delight. As for example, God hath giuen wine to bee nourishment; but man turneth it to poison: God hath giuen it to reioyce our heart, but man changeth it vnto heauinesse; God hath giuen it to preserue the health of the body, but man altereth it to the sicknesse of body and soule. To conclude (that which is the greatest thing of all) by it, man wittingly and willingly transformeth himselfe into a bruite beast, when as he spoileth himselfe of reason, by the which he differeth from them.

Theoph. Thou saiest true. But I see not what it is, by the which men be allured to that sinne. For neither glory, nor profit, nor pleasure can be sought by it. For, what pleasure is it if a man drinke, not being athirst?

Mat. No greater than it should be, if a man after dainty cheare did presently eate. But therein the very bruite beasts go beyond them in moderation. For, a man shall not see any of them endure to drinke more than is necessary.

Theoph. Hitherto enough of drunkennesse: now let vs speake somewhat concerning enuy.

Of enuie.

Mat. It may bee referred to two commaundements: Namely, to the second of this latter Table, and also vnto this fift. For, seeing hatred is the perpetuall companion of it, it compelleth men very oftentimes to murther, which is sufficiently proued by the example of CAIN.

Gen. 4. 8.

Theoph. Thou iudgest rightly. For, by enuie CAIN was stirred vp to kill his brother, because his sacrifice was not accepted of God, but ABELS. Let vs now see how enuie may be referred to this commandement.

Mat. Because by it we are mooued to powre out manifold slanders, and back-bitings against our neighbour, no lesse than by hatred that continually accompanieth it. But this sinne is most lothsome vnto God, as that which proceedeth of pride, and is contrary to Christian charitie, whereof PAVL saith; Charitie enuieth not.

2 Cor. 13. 4.

The

The tenth commandement.

Thou ſhalt not couet thy neighbours houſe, thou ſhalt not couet thy neighbours wife, nor his ſeruant, nor his maide, nor his oxe, nor his aſſe, nor any thing that is his.

Theoph. The tenth commandement is behind, the meaning whereof I haue heard before: wee are therefore to come to the expoſition of the text it ſelfe. Containeth it any other thing beſides the deſiring of our neighbours houſe and family, in it expreſſed?

Mat. God meant to rehearſe ſuch things, the obiects whereof for the moſt part are wont to affect and mooue vs, vnder which he comprehendeth all of the ſame kinde; namely all luſts, by the which wee are ſtirred vp to the tranſgreſſing of any commandement of the latter Table.

Theoph. Is not that only luſt forbidden in this commandement, whereunto our will giueth conſent?

Mat. That luſt was contained in the former commandements, wherein not onely wicked deeds, but alſo counſels, and deliberate conſent of the will be forbidden. Therefore in this commandement, the Lord proceedeth further, for he requireth ſomewhat more of vs, namely, that we be not tickled with any kinde of luſt, although our will conſent not, yea alſo be againſt it.

T. But how canſt thou ſhew that this is the mind of God?

Mat. Moſt eaſily, for the Apoſtle ſaith; I had not known luſt, if the Law had not ſaid, Thou ſhalt not luſt. But it is more cleare than light, that all men without the Law could haue vnderſtood, that concupiſcence ioyned with conſent was ſinne: and therefore it is apparent, that the Apoſtle meant, that the concupiſcence which the will reſiſteth is forbidden by the Law. That may alſo be gathered by the ſumme of the Law, wherein the Lord commandeth, that we loue him with all our heart, with all our ſoule, and with all our mind: whereupon it followeth, that wee cannot be tickled euen with the leaſt concupiſcence, but preſently there is ſome thing in our minde void of the loue of God, and therefore that is a ſin againſt the Law. Rom 7.7. Math. 22.37.

Theoph. So farre forth as I ſee, God in his Law requireth of vs moſt exact perfection.

Mat.

Math.5.48. *Mat.* He requireth it indeed. For hee would haue vs to be perfect, euen as he himselfe is perfect. And therefore he hath set before vs his Law in stead of a glasse, and a most perfect patterne of righteousnesse, that the life of man might be conformable to the puritie of his diuine Majestie. Insomuch as if there were any that did perfectly keepe it, he should in his life perfectly set forth the image and likenesse of God.

The summe of the Law. Math.22.37.

Thou shalt loue the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soule, and with all thy minde. This is the first and the great commandement. And the second is like vnto this; Thou shalt loue thy neighbour as thy selfe. On these two commandements hang the whole Law and the Prophets.

Theoph. I am thoroughly satisfied concerning the exposition of the Law. Now I would haue the sum of it, which you repeated euen now, to be declared by you, that I may vnderstand it. And first, why he comprehendeth all the keeping of the first Table, vnder the loue of himselfe?

Mat. This was done, that wee might vnderstand from what fountaine that loue floweth, and what effects it worketh in vs.

Theoph. From whence floweth it?

Mat. From the knowledge of him, and the assurance of the loue wherewith he loueth vs. For it cannot be that we should loue any, except wee know him, and doe certainly know that we are loued againe of him.

Theoph. What effect worketh that loue of God in vs?

Mat. Willing obedience. For, we desire to obey him whome we loue, and the more loue increaseth, the more obedience increaseth. By these things therefore it is plaine, that the obseruation of the whole first Table, is contained vnder the loue of God. For he cannot be loued of vs, but we doe in like manner,

1. Reuerence him.
2. Put our whole trust in him.
3. Call vpon him, whensoeuer any necessitie presseth vs.

4. And

4. And giue him thankes for his innumerable benefits. Moreouer, if he be loued of vs, we will not giue the worship due vnto him alone, to creatures, or to dumbe idols: but according as he requireth, we will spiritually worship him.

If he be loued of vs, it will be our chiefest delight to speake of him: which will be done of vs with due reuerence and religion, diligently taking heed that we offend him not in a word.

If (I say) he be loued of vs, his Sabbaths shall be our delight, because we may speake with him more commodiously, aswell by the holy ministerie of the word and reading, by the which he speaketh vnto vs; as by prayers, by the which we speake vnto him. Moreouer, those delights will engraue such sweetnesse in our minds, that we shall easily despise all sports and other worldly things, wherein worldly men are wont to spend those daies.

Hereupon it is plaine, that so many as loue God doe keepe the whole first Table.

Theoph. But wherefore doth the Lord adde; that God must be loued of vs, with all our heart, with all our soule, and with all our vnderstanding.

Mat. To the end we may know, that our mind & soule ought to be filled with his loue: and therefore it is required, that he might be most entirely loued of vs aboue all others, aboue parents, brethren, sisters, wiues, children, friends, goods, yea, and our selues also. But if at any time a man should be set betweene two loues, whereof the one were that that is due vnto God, and the other, that that is due vnto parents, brethren, sisters, wiues, children, friends; and that these two loues cannot stand together, so as while we apply our selues to the one, wee neglect the other: then the Lord is to be preferred before all the other, and all other things are to be neglected, that we may Follow him. For so Christ himselfe saith, Hee that loueth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me; and he that loueth sonne or daughter more than mee, is not worthy of mee. As if hee said, whosoeuer forsaketh not wife and children, and all his goods, rather than to denie me, is not worthy of mee. And that more is, in the same Math. 10. 37.

sense

ſenſe he ſaith; If any commeth vnto me, & hateth not his father and mother, and wife and children, and brethren & ſiſters, and euen his owne life, he cannot be my diſciple.

Theoph. But vnleſſe I be deceiued, the loue of God doth not wholly, but in part ſeclude the loue of our neighbour.

Mat. It doth indeed wholly ſeclude all falſe loue, but the true loue it eſtabliſheth: now that is it which Chriſt made the ſumme of the latter Table, in theſe words: Thou ſhalt loue thy neighbour as thy ſelfe.

Theoph. Declare vnto me that true loue which is eſtabliſhed by the loue of God: then I will demand of thee why Chriſt made it the ſumme of the latter Table.

Mat. Then is our neighbour loued of vs, when we loue him onely in God, and for Gods cauſe. For, if he be loued of vs, either becauſe he is our kinſman, or friend, without any reſpect to the loue of God, that loue is not Chriſtian but naturall: and agreeth vnto bruit beaſts. For this cauſe Chriſt ſaid; If you loue them that loue you, what thanke ſhall you haue? for euen ſinners loue thoſe that loue them. Therefore alſo hath hee commanded the loue of our enemies: for therein appeareth moſt manifeſtly that whereof we now ſpeake, namely, that our neighbour is to be loued for God: for an enemie cannot be loued for his owne ſake, yea rather he ought to be hated. But when he is conſidered in God, then he ceaſeth to be an enemy, & is made a neighbour. Euen as therefore all flouds doe come out of the ſea, and doe fall againe into the ſea: ſo our loue towards our neighbour, ought to begin in God, and to end in God: otherwiſe it is vicious and euill.

Luke 6, 32.

Theo. Wherefore ſaieſt thou, that this true loue of our neighbour, which thou haſt euen now expounded, is eſtabliſhed by the loue of God?

Mat. Becauſe it is one loue, but the difference ſtandeth in the obiects: for when God ſaw that himſelfe, becauſe he is inuiſible, ſhould hardly be loued of vs that doe ſo much cleaue to the loue of things that be ſeene; he hath ſet our neighbour before vs as a viſible obiect, in whom hee engraued his owne image, that wee ſhould worſhip him by ſhewing towards our neighbour the ſame loue that is due vnto himſelfe, and beſtow vpon our neighbour, ſome

of

of those duties and benefits, which by good right doe altogether appertaine to his Maiestie: Forasmuch as (according to the saying of DAVID) our wel doing reacheth not to him, and indeed he hath no need of it. Wherefore as no man can rightly loue his neighbor, but he first loueth God, so can no man sincerely loue God, but he doth also loue his neighbour, whom he hath so earnestly commended vnto vs. Hence is that saying of IOHN: If any say, I loue God, and hateth his brother, he is a lier: For, he that loueth not his brother, whom hee seeth, how can hee loue God whom he hath not seene? Psal. 16. 2. 1. Ioh. 4. 20.

Theoph. Now I vnderstand what the true loue of our neighbour is, and how it springeth from the loue of God. It is therefore to be seene, why Christ setteth it downe for the summe of the latter Table.

Mat. Because, as the loue of God containeth the whole obseruation of the first Table, as hath beene saide before: so the loue of our neighbour, the whole second Table; so that he be loued of vs as our selues. Which Christ did not omit.

Theoph. Declare these things vnto me more at large.

Mat. If we loue our neighbours as our selues, we shall doe to them, all that wee would haue them doe vnto vs: and we will not do those things, which we would not haue done to our selues. And therefore we will honour parents & other superiors: for if we were in their place, we would be honoured. Wee will doe no despite to our neighbour, which we would not suffer to be done to our selues. Wee will not by adulterie defile the wife, sister, or daughter of our neighbour, because we would not haue so great an iniurie done to our selues. Wee will not steale his goods; yea rather, if the matter so require, we will relieue his pouerty with our plenty; for so would vvee haue it done vvith our selues. We vvill not beare false vvitnesse against him, neither backbite him, neither vvill vve vexe or moue him, vvith scornes, flouts, mocks, and taunts: for vve vvould take it grieuously, if it vvere done to our selues. To conclude, vve vvill couet nothing that is his, forasmuch as if any coueted our goods, vve vvould condemne him.

By vvhich it appeareth, that the fulfilling of the second Table

Table is contained vnder the loue of our neighbour, and the breaking of it, vnder the hatred of him.

Theoph. But who is our neighbour, of whom there is mention in this place, and elsewhere in many places in the Scripture?

Who is our neighbour.

Mat. Vnder this name bee comprehended not onely ſtiends, kinsfolkes, and alliance by marriage, but alſo all others of whatſoeuer ſexe, countrey, condition, or religion, they be; and that more is, our enemies alſo, which is plaine to gather, by the example alledged by Chriſt.

Luk. 10. 33.

But that letteth not a diſtinction of perſons, of whome we ought to helpe ſome before others, according to the band wherewith we be bound to them, and by name, their faith. For Paul ſaith, Doe good vnto all, but eſpecially to the houſholde of faith. In which words he teacheth, that charity or loue rightly ordered, beginneth with the faithfull, and afterward is derined vnto others. For, if our loue (which we taught before) ought to be referred vnto God, verily the neerer any commeth to God, ſo much the more high degree of it doth he deſerue: then the reſt we ought to reſerue to our kindred and allies, as euery one ſhall be ioyned vnto vs by the neerer band.

Gal 6. 10.

The other part of this Chapter: For what end good workes are to be done, and what is the vſe of them.

Theoph. We haue made an end of the former part of this chapter, wherein thou haſt declared, what workes be worthy the name of good works; let vs therefore come to the other part, which we appointed to a diſcourſe of their end and vſe.

The faithfull cannot be iuſtified by workes.

First therefore I demaund, whether the faithfull may be iuſtified by good workes? forasmuch as by regeneration they be made fit to doe them.

Mat. Two things let, that it cannot be ſo.

Theoph. What are they?

Mat. Becauſe iuſtification, & therefore ſaluation, goeth before good workes. For, the way which the holy Ghoſt vſeth to make vs able for them, is this, namely, that by faith it ioyneth vs with Chriſt. Whereof Chriſt himſelfe is witneſſe

neſſe, when he ſaith; As the branch can beare no fruit, of it ſelfe, that is, except it abide in the vine, euen ſo you, except you abide in me. I am the Vine: you are the branches: he that abideth in me, and he in whom I abide, bringeth forth much fruit. For without me you can doe nothing. Ioh. 15 4.

Therefore by faith beeing vnited or made one with Chriſt, we are iuſtified and ſaued, by the imputation of his moſt perfect holineſſe and righteouſneſſe: the effects or fruits whereof, be the good workes that we do. Therefore, good works go not before our iuſtification and ſaluation, but they follow after, as it was well ſaid by one of the Ancients. But that which followeth after, cannot be the cauſe of that which goeth before. By this argument PAVL prooueth that we are not iuſtified by workes. For he ſaith: You are ſaued by grace, through faith, & that not of your ſelues, it is the gift of God: not of workes, leſt any man ſhould boaſt himſelfe. For wee are his workmanſhip, created in Chriſt Ieſus vnto good works, which God hath ordained that we ſhould walke in them. In which words he ſheweth that good workes cannot be ſaid to be the cauſe of our ſaluation, becauſe they bee done by God himſelfe in vs through Chriſt, after that we be ſaued by faith in him. Imputation is, to haue it accounted ours. Eph 2 8.

Theoph. Let vs come to the other thing, which thou ſaiedſt did let, that wee are not iuſtified nor ſaued by our good workes.

Mat. It is more plaine than the former: namely, becauſe to the end a man may be iuſtified by workes, it is neceſſarily required, that he haue fulfilled the whole Law, and that he be not found ſo much as ſprinkled or wet with any, euen the very leaſt ſpot of ſinne, before God. For, euen as one little drop of inke ſtaineth a whole glaſſe of cleare water: ſo one onely ſinne is ſufficient to ouerthrow all righteouſneſſe of works. For this cauſe IAMES ſaith; Whoſoeuer keepeth the whole Law, and offendeth in one point, is guilty of all. But it is certaine, that the faithfull in this life, cannot at any time come to the higheſt degree of that perfection, no not to the middlemoſt. Therefore the defect or want of righteouſneſſe doth by many degrees exceede all the ableneſſe vnto it, which any may attaine vnto, by the guidance of the holy Ghoſt. Therefore Iam. 2 10.

by workes they ought to looke for the curſe onely, which the Scripture pronounceth againſt thoſe that haue not perfectly fulfilled the Law.

Whether the faithfull can fulfill the law.

Theoph. How knoweſt thou, that the faithfull after regeneration cannot fulfill the Law?

Rom.7.14.18.

Mat. PAVL doth moſt plainely witneſſe in his owne perſon, ſpeaking of the condition of a man regenerated, in theſe words; We know that the Law is ſpirituall, but I am carnall, ſolde vnder ſin: for to will is preſent with mee, but I finde no meanes to performe that which is good. For

Pſal.143.2.

this cauſe DAVID ſaith; Enter not into iudgement with thy ſeruant; for no man liuing ſhall bee iuſtified in thy ſight.

Luk.1.6.

Theoph. But LVKE ſpeaking of ZACHARY, and ELIZABETH, ſaith; They were both iuſt in the ſight of God, walking in all the commandements and ordinances of the Lord without reproofe.

Gen.6.9.

Mat. The ſame thing is alſo ſaid of NOAH, by MOSES; NOAH was a iuſt and an vpright man in his time. Howbeit, the Scripture ſaith not, that they were without ſin: but that they diligently applied themſelues vnto righteouſnes, and laboured to walke in the commandements of the Lord. In which ſenſe the faithfull in many places are called iuſt or righteous, aſwell to note that zeale by the which they ſeeke to come to the perfection of righteouſneſſe, as alſo that we may vnderſtand, that their obedience, notwithſtanding it bee imperfect, is as acceptable to God through Chriſt, as if it were perfect.

Theoph. But how knoweſt thou, that this is the meaning of the Scripture, and that they, who it ſaith were iuſt, were not without ſinne, ſeeing the words ſound otherwiſe?

Mat. It is not hard to gather it out of the things, which preſently after be obſerued of the Scripture it ſelfe: namely, that ZACHARY beleeued not the words of the Angell, and that NOAH was drunken. Moreouer, theſe things bee plainely expreſſed in it: If we ſay, that we haue not ſinned,

1.Ioh.1.10.

we make God a lier, and his word is not in vs. And indeed if we doe but a little more attentiuely conſider of it, what is he that in this life can euer,

Loue God with all his heart?

Put

Put his whole truſt in him alone?

Perfectly rule his owne affections?

So keepe his tongue vnder, that it ſend out no idle words? Whereof at the laſt day, Chriſt ſaith, an account must be giuen. Math. 12. 36.

So keepe his eies in order, that they luſt not, and his minde that it thinke no vaine thing?

When he emploieth himſelfe about the worſhip of God, to doe it with that affection, namely, ſo perfect, pure, and whole, as it is required of him?

Finally, who is it, which letteth not many occaſions of doing well, or doing ſome thing better than he doth it, to eſcape him?

If our owne heart condemne vs in theſe; and in many other the greateſt things, God (ſaith IOHN) is greater than our heart, that is, knoweth innumerable ſinnes, which we our ſelues know not. Hence is that ſaying of DAVID: Who vnderſtandeth his faults? cleanſe me from ſecret faults. 1. Ioh. 3. 20. Pſal. 19. 13.

Theoph. I haue in thy ſpeech obſerued foure kinds of ſinnes, whereof men are guilty before God;

1. The commtting of euill.
2. The leauing of good vndone.
3. Hidden ſinnes.
4. The imperfection of the good deeds, which in ſmall number are done of vs.

Which things, if they haue place in the faithfull, I muſt needs confeſſe, that they be farre off from being iuſtified by their workes.

Mat. There is no doubt, but theſe bee in the very beſt, which alſo the Scripture confirmeth, when it ſaith: Man drinketh iniquity as water: as if it ſaid, that iniquitie were as familiar and common a thing with him, as to drinke. We be all of vs an vncleane thing, and all our righteouſneſſe as filthy clouts The children of men are vanity, the chiefe men are liers: to lay them vpon a ballance, they are altogether lighter then vanitie. Iob. 15. 16. Iſa. 64. 6. Pſal. 62. 9.

Theoph. Doe theſe things agree to the faithfull, as well, as to the vnfaithfull?

Mat. Yea verily: for they of whom theſe things were written, were faithfull and beleeuers; neuertheleſſe, they did

recken themſelues alſo in that number, as Esay by name, for he ſaith, We all are as vncleane things: and againe; All our righteouſneſſe is as filthy clouts. But if our iuſtice and righteouſneſſe be ſuch, how I pray thee muſt it be thought of our righteouſneſſe and ſinnes?

What difference concerning good workes is betweene the faithfull and the vnfaithfull.

Theoph. Seeing the matter is ſo, it ſeemeth altogether to follow, that there is very little difference concerning good workes, betweene the beleeuers, and the vnbeleeuers.

Mat. It followeth not, for ſinne onely dwelleth in the faithfull, but it raigneth not: howbeit, in the vnfaithfull and vnbeleeuers, it both dwelleth and raigneth. Therefore euery beleeuer may vſe that ſaying of Paul: I do not the good that I would. The vnbeleeuers cleane contrariwiſe, Wee doe not ſo much euill as wee would: Which, howſoeuer they ſpeake not, they haue it in their minde. As it is to bee ſeene in drunkards, theeues, fornicators, ambitious and couetous perſons, whoſe luſt can neuer be ſatisfied. Moreouer, the wicked waxe euery day worſe and worſe: contrariwiſe, the faithfull make proceedings in goodneſſe, by the which (notwithſtanding they bee but ſmall) it is apparent that ſinne is ouercome of them.

Rom 7. 16.

Theoph. But how commeth it to paſſe, that a beleeuer, being regenerated and lightened with the holy Ghoſt, cannot perfectly obey God?

Ma. Becauſe our regeneration is onely begun in vs, but in this life is neuer perfected. For by that meanes the Lord will keepe vs in humility, as alſo together with it make place to his owne infinite mercy. Therefore, ſo long as we liue here, as well our faith, as our repentance, be very farre off from perfection. For there is ſtill behinde in vs, ſome part of our corruption, which the Scripture calleth fleſh, and the old man: it reſiſteth or withſtandeth the part that is regenerate, which is called the ſpirit, and the new man. And all theſe things Paul notably comprehendeth in theſe words; The fleſh luſteth againſt the ſpirit, and the ſpirit againſt the fleſh, and theſe be contrary the one to the other, ſo as you doe not the things that you would.

Gal 5 17.

The battell of the fleſh and the ſpirit.

Theoph. Wherein ſtandeth the ſtriuing of the fleſh and the ſpirit?

Mat. 1. The fleſh is puft vp with ignorance, and loue of

of the world: but the ſpirit is endued with the knowledge, loue, and feare of God.

2. The fleſh ſtriueth to follow it owne pleaſures, and wicked affections, for it is giuen vnto all ſinnes: but the ſpirit giueth it ſelfe to this one thing, that it may obey God, and ſet foorth his glory.

3. The fleſh is full of diſtruſt and impatience: but the ſpirit humbleth it ſelfe vnder the mighty hand of God, reſteth in his mercy, and faſhioneth it ſelfe vnto his will.

Finally, the fleſh holdeth vs in theſe earthly things: but the ſpirit lifteth vs vp into heauen.

Moreouer, this contrarietie breedeth in vs a continuall warfare: for the fleſh alwaies ſtirreth vs vp and ſetteth vpon vs, with ſo many intiſements and crafts, that except wee take diligent heede, wee be eaſily deceiued and ouercome of it. For this cauſe Chriſt warneth vs, that we ſhould watch; Watch and pray, leſt ye enter into tentation; (that is, leſt you be ouercome of tentation) the ſpirit indeed is ready, but the fleſh is weake. Mat. 26. 41.

Theoph. Doth the ſpirit at length goe alwaies away with the victorie?

Mar. It doth indeed, but not without great labour: for the fleſh many waies woundeth vs: for it cauſeth vs many times to fall into moſt hainous ſins. Moreouer, although we doe often ouercome, it ceaſleth not to renew the battell. For the diuell, the enemie of our ſaluation, ioineth himſelfe vnto it, who vſeth that domeſticall or houſhold enemie, that he may the more eaſily enter into our hearts, and at length ouercome vs. For this cauſe PAVL moſt feruently deſired to bee deliuered from it; for hee ſaith; O wretched man that I am, who ſhall deliuer mee from this body of death? Hee calleth it death, becauſe hee thought that continuall battell more grieuous than death it ſelfe. Rom. 7. 24.

Theoph. Now I will returne to the order of our diſcourſe: for I ſee, that the faithfull cannot fulfill the Law of God. And this alſo I grant, that the faithfull cannot bee altogether iuſtified by their workes. But may not this bee done in part, ſo as Chriſt ſupply that which wanteth?

Mar. This doubtleſſe cannot be. For IAMES ſaith; Whoſoeuer keepeth the whole law, & yet faileth in one point, Iam. 2. 10.

is guilty of all. Therfore PAVL, intreating of the way whereby we attaine iuſtification and ſaluation, excludeth works, not in part, but wholly. As for example: In the Epiſtle to the Romans, after long diſputatiõ of this matter, at length he addeth; We conclude therefore, that a man is iuſtified by faith, without the works of the Law: and in the chapter following; To him that worketh, the wages is not counted by fauour, but by debt: but to him that worketh not, but beleeueth in him that iuſtifieth the vngodly, his faith is counted for righteouſneſſe. The ſame alſo he writeth in another place; You are ſaued by grace through faith, and that not of your ſelues, it is the gift of God: not of works, leſt any ſhould boaſt himſelfe. In which words hee doth ſufficiently declare, that good works be of no account before God, to iuſtifie and ſaue vs: but that all is to be aſcribed to the only mercy & grace of God, by faith in Chriſt. Moreouer, grace ſhould not bee truly grace in reſpect of God, if it be not wholly and altogether free: for works and it cannot ſtand together in the matter of ſaluation.

Rom 3. 28.

Rom 4. 4.

Eph. 2. 8.

Why wee be iuſtified before God no otherwiſe than by faith.

Theoph. Why ſo?

Mat. Becauſe the one deſtroieth the other, as the Apoſtle teſtifieth to the Romans in theſe words; If we be ſaued by grace, it is no more of works; or elſe were grace no more grace: but if it be of works, It is no more grace; or els were worke no more worke. Where he ſheweth that there is no place for the grace of God, vntil we haue throwen away al truſt & confidẽce in our own works. which thing the ſame apoſtle teſtifieth, that himſelf did. For although cõcerning the righteouſneſſe which is by the law, he were without reproofe: hee eſteemed all his good workes as dung, that he might be found not hauing his owne righteouſnes, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Chriſt.

Rom. 11. 6.

Phil. 3. 6.

In another place alſo, he warneth vs of the ſame thing; Yee are made void of Chriſt, as many of you as be iuſtified by the law, and are fallen from grace. Now he ſpeaketh to thoſe that would ioine the righteouſneſſe of the law, with the righteouſneſſe of faith.

Gal. 5. 4.

Theoph. But ſome doe obiect, that the Apoſtle, whenſoeuer he ſaith, we are not iuſtified by the works of the law, ſpeaketh of the ceremoniall law, that was then aboliſhed by

by the comming of Christ, but not of the morall Law.

Mat. That is a vaine shift, which also is most easie to be confuted, by the order of the Apostles speech: & first of all in the Epistle to the Romanes (before he draweth out this conclusion that is the third Chapter: By the workes of the law, shal no flesh be iustified in the sight of God) in the first chapter he prooueth at large, that all the heathen were full of all vnrighteousnesse, fornication, wickednes, couetousnesse, and other innumerable sinnes. But in the second he sheweth that the Iewes notwithstanding they made a faire shew of outward holines, yet were infected and stained with the same sins they condemned in others. Whereupon it is plaine that in this place, there is onely mention of morall works; and not of the ceremoniall. Likewise also in the Epistle to the Galathians, where he doth especially intreate of the ceremonies, hee alleadgeth both the sentences of MOSES, namely the curse to those that fulfill not the whole Law, and life to those that keepe it. And in the former indeede he teacheth, that so many as trust to the works of the Law to be iustified by them, be vnder the curse, becaus they cannot wholly and fully keepe it. And in the other, he declareth, that there is so much difference betweene the Law and faith, that if any man bee iustified by faith, he cannot in any sort obtaine it by the Law. But it is certaine that aswell the curse threatned to the transgressors of the law, as the promise of eternall life made to such as fulfill it, are not to be restrained to the ceremonies alone, but are also to be referred to the morall Law, and that too by more right: forasmuch as God (as HOSEA saith) preferreth mercy before sacrifice. Moreouer, after the Apostle in the second chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians hath affirmed, that we are saued by grace through faith, and that not of our selues, he addeth; But of the gift of God: not of workes, lest any man should boast himselfe. Which words doe most euidently shew, that the Apostle speaketh not of the ceremoniall workes, but of morall, which giue men farre more large matter of boasting than the ceremoniall do. Finally, when he writeth to TITVS, that we are saued not by the works of righteousnesse which we haue done, but by the mercy of God; who

Hos. 6 6.

Titus 3. 5.

ſeeth not that the Apoſtle doth eſpecially intreat of moral workes? to which the title of righteouſneſſe agreeth farre better than to the ceremoniall. Which things beeing ſo, there is no doubt but that the Apoſtle whenſoeuer hee ſpeaketh of the workes of the Law, to prooue that wee are neither ſaued nor iuſtified by them, doth no leſſe meane the morall than the ceremoniall, yea rather that hee doth ſhut out both from the cauſe of ſaluation & righteouſnes.

Theoph. But why doth he ſo often call them the works of the Law?

Mat. To teach, that if the workes commanded of God, and euen contained in his owne law, bee to no purpoſe to iuſtifie vs, then the workes commanded and deuiſed by men are much leſſe able and fit to doe it.

Theoph. Now doe I agree vnto thee. For I perceiue that we are neither iuſtified nor ſaued by workes, neither in the whole, nor in part, as hath bin diligently prooued by thee. And verily (vnleſſe I bee deceiued) there is great iniurie done to the glory of God, while men goe about to darken the force and power of his grace and mercy, mingling the ſame with the filthineſſe of our workes. But ſeeing the matter is ſo, why did God giue the morall law?

Why God gaue a law that we cannot keepe.

Mat. The Apoſtle witneſſeth, that it was not to the end we ſhould be iuſtified or ſaued by it. For he ſaith, If there had beene a Law giuen that could haue giuen life, ſurely righteouſneſſe ſhould haue bin by the law: But the Scripture hath concluded all vnder ſin, that the promiſe by the faith of Ieſus Chriſt: ſhould be giuen to them that beleeue. Notwithſtanding it is not vnprofitable to the faithfull, nay rather they reape a double benefit by it, wherein bee comprehended the ends for the which God gaue it vnto vs. I ſaid to the faithfull, becauſe it hath this onely work toward the vnbeleeuers, that their condemnation may bee the more heauy: foraſmuch as comming to the knowledge of Gods will by it, they doe willingly run into the contrary.

Of the vſe of the law. Gal. 3 21. 22.

The vſe of the Law, in reſpect of the vnfaithfull.

Theoph. Let vs conſider of that two-fold benefite which thou ſaidſt the beleeuers reape by it: and declare the firſt.

Mat. It is noted by the Apoſtle in the Epiſtle to the Galathians. For after that he hath ſhewed that we cannot attaine ſaluation by the Law, hee addeth: Wherefore then

ſerueth

ſerueth the Law? It was added becauſe of the tranſgreſſi- Gal.3.19.
ons, that is, that by the helpe of it, we might acknowledge our ſins, as the ſame Apoſtle in another place expoundeth it in theſe words; By the law commeth the knowledge of Rom.3.20.
ſinne. For if we doe examine our works by that perfection which the Law requireth of vs, then it ſhall appeare moſt euidently, how many waies we be guilty before God, and therefore what ſeuerall condemnation we haue deſerued.

Theoph. But what profit haue we by that?

Mat. Much. For, as a ſicke man, except hee thorowly feele his ſickneſſe, and perceiue preſent danger, will not go to the Phyſitian: euen ſo the feeling of our ſinnes, and the danger of eternall death, which we ſee hanging ouer our heads, driueth vs to ſeeke for that true Phyſitian of our ſoules, Chriſt Ieſus, from whom by faith wee may receiue the remedy offered vs in the Goſpell: which otherwiſe we would haue neglected. Therefore PAVL ſaith; The Law Gal.3.24.
was our Schoole-maſter to bring vs vnto Chriſt. And in another place; Chriſt is the end of the Law for righteouſ- Rom.10.4.
neſſe vnto euery one that beleeueth. And this is the firſt benefit which we haue by the Law.

Theoph. Shew briefly the other.

Mat. After that we be regenerated, and therefore made fit to do good workes, then the Law teacheth vs whatſoeuer is to bee performed of vs that we may obey God. For, although we cannot come to the perfection whereunto it leadeth vs: yet wee muſt ſet it before our eies, as a marke whereat we are to leuell continually, that daily more and more we may ſtriue to hit it. Heereunto appertaineth that exhortation of Chriſt: Be ye perfect, as your Father which Mat.5.48.
is in heauen is perfect. The Law therefore is as it were a glaſſe, wherein we may behold the ſpots of our ſoule, and ſo indeed bee compelled by faith to waſh them away in Chriſts blood. Moreouer, it is a lanterne vnto our feete, which guideth vs that wee goe not out of the right waie from the path of righteouſneſſe.

Theoph. Seeing good works be not the cauſe of ſaluation, it ſeemeth to follow that they be altogether vnprofitable, and therefore that we need not to be greatly careſull of them.

Mat.

Mat. It followeth not. For God hath deliuered vs out of the hands of our ſpirituall enemies, namely the Diuell and ſinne (ſaith ZACHARIE) that we ſhould ſerue him with holineſſe and righteouſneſſe in his ſight, al the daies of our life. PAVL alſo confirmeth the ſame thing in the Epiſtle to the Epheſians. For after that he hath affirmed, that we are ſaued by grace through faith, and that not of our ſelues, it was the gift of God, not of works: preſently he addeth; For wee are his workemanſhip created in Chriſt Ieſus vnto good works, which God hath prepared that wee ſhould walke in them. And againe in another place; The grace of God that bringeth ſaluation vnto all men hath appeared, teaching vs, that denying vngodlineſſe and worldly lufts, we ſhould liue ſoberly, and iuſtly, and godly in this preſent world. Thou ſeeſt how diligently good works be commended in the Scripture, as thoſe that be acceptable vnto God through Chriſt, by whoſe holineſſe all their filthineſſe, aud vncleannes is couered.

Luke 1.75.

Ephes. 1.8. & 10.

Tit. 2.12.

Theoph. But what vſe is there of them?

Mat. The vſe is threefold, and thoſe indeed moſt profitable. The firſt, which is alſo the chiefe, reſpecteth the glory of God, that ought to be deerer vnto vs than our owne ſaluation. But by them it is eſpecially aduanced, as it appeareth by the words of Chriſt, Let your light ſo ſhine before men that they may ſee your good works, and glorifie your Father which is in heauen. For this cauſe PAVL warning the Philippians to be full of the fruites of righteouſneſſe which are by Chriſt Ieſus, addeth; To the glory and praiſe of God.

A three fold vſe of good works.

Mat. 5.16.

Phil. 1.11.

The ſecond vſe reſpecteth our neighbour. For, by the vprightneſſe and integritie of our life, hee is prouoked to the ſame earneſt deſire and exerciſe of godlineſſe. I paſſe ouer the good turnes which he hath by our charitie and good works. The third vſe ſtandeth in this, that by them our conſcience is quieted. For, they be teſtimonies and witneſſes of our faith, and therefore of our ſaluation.

Theoph. But how can it bee, that good workes ſhall bee witneſſes of our faith?

Mat. Wee haue already ſhewed the cauſe before, namely for that the holy Ghoſt doth neuer worke faith in our

hearts, without repentance, from whence good works do flow, which therfore be visible or seene testimonies of our inuisible or vnseene faith: euen as the goodnesse of the tree is iudged by the good fruit, and the inward health or soundnesse of a mans body, by the outward disposition of all the parts.

Theoph. Therefore, vnlesse I be deceiued, this thou saiest, that faith cannot be without good works. Faith cannot be without good works.

Mat. I say so. Euen as fire cannot be without heate, and the Sun without light. And verily faith of it owne nature bringeth foorth good works. For how can it be that our hearts should be reformed by faith, so as wee doe embrace the loue wherewith God loueth vs in Christ, but that they be also stricken with loue toward him againe, by meanes whereof they both earnestly desire to obey him, and doe labour to auoid rebellion against his Maiestie? I adde further, that faith can no more stand together with an euill conscience, than water with fire. For it cannot be, so long as sinne raigneth in vs, and we willingly offend God, that wee should be assured of his loue, so as wee may put our whole trust in him, and repose our hope in his fauour and goodnesse, notwithstanding that infinite mercie of Christs death be knowne and perceiued of vs.

Theoph. As far as I see, faith bringeth forth good works, by the which it is afterward preserued in our hearts.

Mat. Yea verily: euen as fire causeth ashes, wherwith it is afterward cherished, fed, and maintained. But by these things it is plaine, that it is so far off that faith (which notwithstanding some say) should destroy good workes, that rather by it they are built vp and fortified. Faith the mother of good workes of which it is after preserued

Theoph. Seeing then faith cannot bee without good works, it followeth, that all they which boast of it, and doe no good workes, be liers, and deceiue themselues.

Mat. It followeth: and that is the disputation of IAMES the Apostle against the Libertines, whom he speaketh vnto in these words; Shew me thy faith out of thy workes, and I will shew thee my faith by my workes; whereby hee sheweth, that no man can be certaine of his faith, which is inuisible, vnlesse he haue visible testimonies of it, namely, good works. Whereupon it is that the same Apostle in the Iam. 2. 18.

end

Iam.2.26. end of that Chapter concludeth thus; As the body without the ſpirit is dead, euen ſo that faith that is without good workes is dead: that is, it not true, but a ſhadow, and a vaine empty likeneſſe of it.

Theoph. Therefore wee are neither iuſtified nor ſaued without good workes, although neither, of them, nor by them.

Mat. I grant it. For although the kingdome of heauen bee not the wages of ſeruants, but the inheritance of children: yet no man is reckoned among the children of God, Rom.8.14. Gal.5.22. 23. that is not led by the ſpirit of God, (as PAVL ſpeaketh:) & therefore doth the workes of the ſpirit, ſuch as are theſe, loue, ioy, peace, long ſuffering, gentlenes, goodnes, faith, meekeneſſe, temperance, and ſuch like. Therefore the 1Cor.6.9. ſame Apoſtle in another place giueth warning; Be not deceiued: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers nor wantons, nor theeues, nor couetous, nor drunkards, nor railers, nor extortioners, ſhall inherite the kingdome of God. The ſame thing doth alſo Chriſt himſelfe confirme, when he ſaith; Not euery one that ſaith to me, Lord Math.7.21. Lord, ſhall enter into the kingdome of heauen, but hee that doth my Fathers will that is in heauen.

Mat.5.20. And againe in another place; I ſay vnto you, Except your righteouſneſſe exceede the righteouſneſſe of the Scribes and Phariſes, you ſhall not enter into the kingdome of heauen.

Theoph. Now do I conſent vnto you, and doe acknowledge that good workes be not vnprofitable, although wee bee neither iuſtified nor ſaued by them: Yea rather that they be of ſpeciall vſe, and therefore that the faithfull with all their hearts ſhould giue themſelues to them, foraſmuch as they ſerue,

1. To the glory of God,
2. The edification of our neighbour,
3. And to the confirmation of our faith and ſaluation.

Mat. Adde heereunto, that God to whom they be acceptable through Chriſt, rewardeth them with ſundrie bleſſings both ſpirituall and temporall, according to the promiſes almoſt without number contained in his word. Moreouer, hither is to bee referred the word of Reward, which

which is vsed in many places in the Scripture: as whē Iohn exhorteth the faithfull to perseuerance, he saith; Looke vnto your selues, that wee lose not the things we haue wrought; but that yee may haue a full reward. Christ also speaking of those which suffer persecution for righteousnesse sake, saith; Great is your reward in heauen. In another place also, Whosoeuer shall giue a cup of cold water onely, to one of those little ones in the name of a Disciple, shall not lose his reward. a. Ioh. 8. Math 5.12. Math.10.42.

Theoph. Seeing therefore God promiseth reward to our workes, it seemeth they deserue somewhat. The confutation of merit.

Mat. It followeth not: For that reward proceedeth of his meere & vndeserued fauor, without any desert of ours.

Theoph. Doest thou take from the faithfull all meriting with God?

Mat. Not I, but the word of God: wherein, his owne mercie is established, and merit is ouerthrowne euen to the very ground; for these two cannot stand together. Furthermore, if any man will a little more diligently examine the nature of Merit or Desert, he shall neuer finde that it hath any place before God.

Theoph. Why so?

Mat. Because, that in deseruing any thing, this is

1. First required, that wee be nothing in his debt, of whom we desire to deserue.

2. Secondly, that wee bring him such things as bee our owne.

3. And last of all, that that which we bring or bestow, be equall, or as much woorth, as the thing that wee seeke to deserue. If but any one of these conditions faile, it can be no merit or desert. How much lesse therefore, if they be all wanting together? But they bee wanting in all our good workes.

Theoph. Declare these things vnto me one after another particularly.

Mat. First, whatsoeuer good workes may be performed of vs, are due vnto God by a double right, namely of our creation and adoption. Hereupon is that saying of Christ warning his Disciples, When ye haue done all the things that are commanded you, say, Wee be vnprofitable seruants: The examination of the merit of workes. Luk 17.10.

wants: for we haue done nothing, but that which was our duty to doe.

Moreouer, it is certaine that whatsoeuer good thing can be done of vs, is from God: who worketh in vs both the will and the deede. Phil.2.13.

Therefore it was notably said of one of the ancient Fathers; God rewardeth his owne good works in vs, and not ours. PAVL also saith; What hast thou, that thou hast not receiued? and if thou hast receiued it, why dost thou boast, as though thou hadst not receiued it? Therefore among men indeede there may bee merit or desert. For the husbandman after he hath digged all day in the vineyard, shall receiue his reward by desert. But with God we can deserue nothing, but that he should punish vs for our offences. 1.Cor.4.7.

The obiection of the defenders of merit.

Theo. The defenders of the opinion of merits, do obiect, that good works be not meritorious of themselues, but in respect of the promise of God himselfe, wherein hee hath promised those things, which otherwise were not due.

The answer to it.

Mat. They are not by this pretence acquited of sacriledge or robbing God. For, they attribute that to themselues, which appertaineth to God alone. For, when God made that promise vnto vs, hee did it of his meere grace and fauour, and therefore merit or desert is shut out. But I will make the whole matter plaine by a familiar example. If any King should promise his bond-slaue an hundred thousand crownes, vpon condition that hee diligently doe a businesse committed to him, the bond-slaue hauing done the commandement, may require the gold, yet not because he hath deserued it. But we that haue not fulfilled the condition enioyned vs, how much lesse haue we deserued the reward promised to our workes?

Theoph. What letteth that we fulfill it not, when we obey the Lord from the heart?

Of the imperfection of our workes.

Mat. The cause hath beene declared already before; namely, for that there can bee no good thing done of vs that is not vncleane and defiled. For as the most pure water, if it runne through an vncleane conduit, is corrupted with the stinke of it: so the good workes that God worketh in vs, be soiled and stained with the filthinesse of our flesh. Therefore euen as the promise of reward is altogether free,

free, and without reſpect of any deſert, ſo is the fulfilling of that promiſe.

Theoph. Why therefore doth God promiſe a reward to our workes, which he may by right require of vs?

Mat. That, that promiſe may be as a ſpurre vnto vs, by the which we might bee driuen forward, to the deſire and doing of them: and that indeede not without cauſe: for we are by our nature very ſlacke vnto them.

Theoph. There is one thing behinde, which I will demand of thee; namely concerning that which was ſaid of thee before, that the obedience which is vndertaken vpon hope of reward, is not acceptable vnto God.

Mat. This alſo is indeede true, if that affection raigne in vs as it doth in the vnfaithfull. Howbeit, it ſhall not hurt, ſo as the loue and feare of God go before, if we be allured and drawne on to his ſeruice, by the hope and looking for of the reward: And on the other ſide, bee kept and held from diſobeying him, by the feare of the puniſhment, that is, of eternall death.

Theoph. But ought not the loue of God to be ſufficient, to bring forth that obedience in the hearts of the faithfull, without borrowing any other ſpur from elſewhere?

Mat. If our regeneration were perfect, as is the regeneration of them which liue bleſſedly in heauen, wee ſhould know God perfectly, whereby we ſhould be ſtirred vp to obey him perfectly. But becauſe there is alwaies behinde in vs ſomething not regenerated, which of it owne nature is in bondage, full of ignorance, without loue of God, it is neceſſarie, that we ſhould be ſtirred vp to that obedience, by the hope of reward: and on the other ſide, by feare of puniſhments be held backe, and kept in obedience. Hereupon it is, that God both rewardeth our good workes in this life, according to his promiſes, and alſo correcteth our ſlackneſſe and inſolency by diuers afflictions which hee ſendeth daily: whereby it appeareth, that hee is true, as well in his promiſes, as in the execution of his threatnings. But ſeeing you haue nothing more to propound, I would aduiſe, that wee put off the reſt of the diſputation till another time, for I ſee that it is now almoſt noone.

Theoph. I haue heard your diſcourſe of good works, as alſo the

the expoſition of the morall law, with ſo great delight, that the time of our ſpeech hath ſeemed to be very ſhort.

Mat. Indeede it is a moſt pleaſant thing to intreat of good works, ſo as it be done holily, & by the rule of Gods word. Howbeit, that ſhall be little, except the practiſe bee adioyned, which verily getteth praiſe with men, comfort to the conſcience, and profit with God. Therefore true and ſound vertue is greatly commended, before vaine prating, or the vnprofitable idle knowledge of it.

The vſe of the doctrine of good workes.

Theoph. I doe remember an excellent ſimilitude, which I haue oftentimes heard of thee, & it is this. As a pretious garment ſhut vp in a cheſt, is altogether vnprofitable; but if it be put on, it is an honour, delight, and profit vnto vs: ſo it is with good workes: for, the knowledge & vaine diſcourſing of the, is of no vſe, except they be put in practiſe.

Mat. It is moſt true. Therefore I pray God, our heauenly Father, that as hee hath imprinted his Law in our mindes, ſo hee will ingraue it together with his loue and feare in our hearts, by the power of his holy Spirit, that being alwaies cloathed with righteouſneſſe and true holines, we may worſhip him with due reuerence and humility, all our life: that ſo

1. He may be glorified of vs,
2. Our neighbour edified,
3. And our faith and ſaluation confirmed, through Ieſus Chriſt our Lord.

Theoph. So be it.

CHAP. II.

Of Prayer: which hath the chiefe place among good workes, to teſtifie and confirme our faith.

THEOPHILVS.

OVr help is in the name of the Lord, which hath made both heauen and earth.

Mat. So be it.

Theoph. Concerning the doctrine of good workes, I am ſufficiently ſatisfied (moſt dearely beloued brother): for I haue learned, that they onely bee worthy the name of good workes, which God hath commanded in his Law: alſo,

also, that they bee not the causes of our iustification and saluation: neuertheless, that they be profitable, both to the glory of God, and to the edification of our neighbours, and very much to the assurance of our saluation and faith.

Now I demand of you, which hath the first place among good workes?

Mat. True prayer, namely, that which is powred from the heart vnto God, with this confidence, that we shall be heard. Which is the chiefe good worke.

Theoph. Why giuest thou it the chiefe place among good workes? A short description of true praier.

Mat. Because by the helpe of it wee obtaine this, that we be able to performe the other good works. Moreouer, it yeeldeth vs the greatest testimonie of our saluation. The excellencie of praier.

Theoph. Whence is it, that it yeeldeth a fuller testimony of our faith, then the other good workes?

Mat. From hence, namely because praier with assured hope of being heard, cannot bee made, vnlesse first we be perswaded of the loue and fauour of God towards vs. For as PAVL saith; How shall they call vpon him, in whom they haue not beleeued? For this cause the same Apostle affirmeth out of the prophesie of IOEL; Whosoeuer shall call vpon the name of the Lord shall be saued. Rom. 10. 13 14

Theoph. But from whence haue we that assurance? seeing we be guilty vnto our selues of our owne vnworthinesse: by the which we deserue, that both we our selues and our praiers should be put backe from the seate of his Maiestie.

Mat. By the intercession or mediation of Iesus Christ, who (as it was shewed by vs in the Chapter of Faith) doth alwaies offer vp to God the Father the merit of his death, for full satisfaction of all our sinnes. Whereupon it commeth to passe, that he is made mercifull vnto vs, and such a one as will bee intreated of vs, so as wee shall receiue whatsoeuer we aske of him. And that doth the Scripture teach in these words; Wee haue an aduocate with the Father, Iesus Christ. 1. Iohn 2. 1.

Theoph. It followeth therefore, that the office of the Mediatour, is by a most strait band ioyned with the office of the Redeemer.

Mat. It is so, and therefore IOHN after these words; We

1.Ioh.2.2. haue an aduocate with the Father, Iesus Christ the righteous, presently addeth, And hee is the propitiation for our sinnes. Hereupon it is, that PAVL ioyneth both the offices 1.Tim.2.5.6. together, when he saith; There is one mediatour of God and man, the man Christ Iesus, which gaue himselfe a ransome for all men.

Theoph. Seeing therefore, one is our Redeemer, euen Christ Iesus, it seemeth to follow, that he alone can also fulfill the office of the Mediator for vs with the Father.

Mat. It followeth, and that indeed necessarily: and for this cause, in the places which we haue heard; we reade it written; One aduocate, one mediatour: for the word ONE, is expresly added, to the end we might know, that besides him alone, there can be no other.

The confutation of the error, about praier to Saints.

Theoph. Therefore they deale foolishly, and without any good ground, whosoeuer seeke other patrons and mediatours besides Christ.

Mat. Very foolishly. For they forsake the Creator, to goe to the creature: the Lord, to goe to the seruant: the most dearely beloued Sonne of the Father, which is in the highest authority & fauour with him to pacifie his wrath, to goe to those which lacke all things that be required to wash away sinnes, and therefore bee vnable to make our prayers acceptable & of force. Moreouer, they do esteeme Christ, as if he were not sufficient enough for the office of the mediator, & therfore deny him to be our true Sauiour: For if he be fit and sufficient for so great an office, why doe they chuse to themselues other mediatours beside him? If they say, they doubt not, but that he is both most powerful and most fit for this thing, but doe doubt somewhat of his will; they doe therein very much bewray themselues to bee vnbeleeuers, which refuse to giue credit vnto him, after that he hath giuen vs so notable a pledge of his exceeding loue: namely, when he vouchsafed both to take vpon him our humane nature, and to suffer the death of the crosse for our redemption. Adde hereunto, that most louingly hee calleth vs vnto himselfe by his word, when he saith; Come Mat.11 28.30. vnto me all ye that labour and bee laden, and I will cause you to haue ease, and you shall finde rest vnto your soules.

Finally, whither soeuer they turne themselues, they shall neuer

neuer escape, but be found iniurious against Christ, forasmuch as they take from him the office of the Mediatour, purchased by his own bloud, to giue it to blessed creatures that be in heauen.

Theoph. They obiect, that the office of Christ is not translated by them to the dead Saints, seeing they end all the praiers they make to God, with these words; Through Iesus Christ our Lord: Whereby they say is declared, that the chiefe honour is giuen to Christ himselfe.

Mat. It is a craft of Satan, by the which he would haue the wickednesse of praying to Saints to be hidden, and so the manifest wrong that they offer vnto Christ, which put ouer his office vnto Saints, while they pray God, that by their merits and intercession, he will grant the things that they desire; and at length adde, through Iesus Christ our Lord. Wherein they imitate and follow him, who after he hath giuen his Prince a blow, would humbly doe him reuerence. The confutation of it.

Theoph. Is it therefore vnlawfull for the faithfull being aliue, mutually among themselues, the one to commend the saluation of the other vnto God by praier? seeing it cannot be, but some thing is taken away from the intercession of Christ. Obiection.

Mat. Not so: for many causes may be alledged, for the which, the one is not onely vnprofitable, but also forbidden, and therefore to be auoided: but the other not onely to be lawfull, but also profitable and necessarie. The confutation of the obiection.

Theoph. Declare those causes.

Mat. I will make foure chiefe.

1. Because loue, that is so much commended vnto vs, is both cherished and increased by praying one for another. But this can haue no place in the dead, of whom SALOMON speaking saith; Both their loue, and their hatred and their enuy is now perished, and they haue no more portion for euer, in all that is done vnder the Sunne. Eccles. 9 6.

2. Because, praying one for another, wee thinke not to be heard for his sake that praieth for vs: which they doe that pray to the Saints departed, and by that meanes giue vnto them the office of Christ.

Theoph. But it may bee, that the same thing may befall

them, which desire to bee holden with the praiers of the godly that bee aliue: for why may not some thinke, that they shall be heard for their holines and good works sake?

Mat. I grant, it is not impossible that some should after that manner abuse the praiers of the godly: but there is the least danger in this behalfe, if it be compared with the other. For, it cannot be in any, but the ignorant and vnskilfull, for whose ignorance wee ought not to refuse that so holy an ordinance of God. But the intercession of departed Saints doth bring with it most manifest danger: for no man can pray vnto them, but he thinketh for their sake to obtain the things which he desireth of God. The proofe whereof are all the formes of praiers written by such as worshipped them.

3. *Theoph.* Goe forward, alleadge the third cause.

Mat. The faithfull, that be aliue, may know the necessities one of another, and pray to God for them: which the faithfull departed cannot. I am not ignorant what they bee wont to obiect, namely that the Saints departed doe, in God, as it were in a glasse, see all the things that be done in this world: but that is altogether to diuine or gueſſe, without testimony of Scripture.

Theoph. Declare the fourth cause?

4. *Mat.* That is the chiefe: namely, because the praiers of the godly being aliue, one for another, are grounded vpon the testimony of the word of God, also vpon examples and promises, by the which it is confirmed, that they shall not be in vaine: but the praiers of the dead are neither grounded vpon any testimony of Gods word, neither vpon promises nor examples.

Theoph. Say you so?

Mat. I say it: and therefore it is not done of faith; for the word of God is the onely foundation of it. Wherefore Rom.14.13. PAVL affirmeth, that whatsoeuer is not of faith is sin. And this reason is sufficient to ouerthrow the intercession of Saints departed. For who can endure this, that man should lift vp himselfe aboue God.

Theoph. I doe now confesse, that all the praiers which are made to saints departed, for this end that they shold be our intercessors and mediatours to God, are to be cast out and hissed

hissed at: and that Christ alone, whose office this is, is sufficient.

Why Christ onely sufficeth the faithfull to doe the office of the mediator with the Father.

Mat. Yea truly, it is extreame madnesse for any to seeke to himselfe another mediator: forasmuch as he can doe it most perfectly, because he lacketh none of the things that suffice to pacifie God, and to cause him to bee mercifull vnto vs. Moreouer, he loueth vs most dearely, and therfore is touched with pity vpon our infirmities. He knoweth our praiers, presently when they be conceiued. Hee commandeth that wee should come vnto him, as often as wee will craue any thing at at the hands of God.

Finally he assureth vs, that we shall obtaine all the things which we shall aske in his name, when he saith, Verily, verily, I say vnto you, whatsoeuer yee shall aske of the Father in my name, he will giue it you. Hitherto haue ye asked nothing in my name: aske and you shall receiue. And in another place he saith: Whatsoeuer you shall aske in my name, I will doe it. Ioh. 16.23. Ioh. 14.13.

Theoph. What meane these words, To aske any thing in the name of Christ?

Mat. It is to beseech God, to heare our praiers, not indeed hauing respect to our vnworthinesse, but to the merit that is continually offered to him of Christ Iesus for vs. Therfore to aske any thing of God in the name of Christ, is answerable to his intercession with the Father for vs, and that more is; an approbation or allowance of it, and the way to be partakers of it.

Theoph. But ought the promise of Christ, wherein he assureth vs, that wee shall receiue whatsoeuer we aske in his name, to bee extended to all things that shall come vnto our mindes, without putting any exception?

Mat. Not so: for our desires for the most part be euill, which if they were fulfilled, would bee to our destruction rather than to our profit. Therefore Christ vnderstandeth onely those things which concerne the glory of God, and our commoditie and saluation: all which things indeed he hath in few words comprehended in that forme of praier, which he hath giuen vs; namely, Our Father which art in heauen, &c.

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Theoph. Must we therfore vse no other forme of praier?

Mat. If you respect the matter of substance, we may vse no other; but it is in our libertie to enlarge it: wherof the holy Scripture yeeldeth vs many examples, in those formes of praier which it setteth before vs; namely, the Psalmes: all which vndoubtedly bee referred to this forme appointed by Christ.

The exposition of the Lords Praier.

Theoph. Let vs examine the forme of praier that Christ hath deliuered: how many parts be there of it?

The summe and parts of the Lords praier.

Mat. In the beginning it containeth a Preface, and afterward six petitions. The first three whereof doe immediatly respect the glory of God. But the latter three containe those things that appertaine to our selues, both for the helpe of this life, and for euerlasting saluation. And they be therefore placed after those that concerne the glorie of God, to the end we might vnderstand, that the latter three be not rightly conceiued and made, vnlesse they bee referred to the glorie of God, as it were vnto their proper end, and that therefore they shall not be heard, according to the saying of the Apostle; You aske and receiue not, because you aske amisse, that you might consume it vpon your lusts.

Iam. 4. 3

The Preface to the Lords Praier.

Our Father which art in heauen.

Theoph. Let vs consider of the preface of the Lords praier.

Mat. It is contained in these words: Our Father which art in heauen.

Theoph. Who is that Father, vnto whom Christ biddeth vs to flie?

Mat. It is the first person of the holy Trinity, namely, the Father of our Lord Iesus Christ.

Theoph. Is therefore one onely person of the Trinity to be praied vnto?

Mat. Wee must know, that in true praier we are onely the instruments of God, who alone in that, as in other good works, worketh the things that concerne our saluation. But that is to bee vnderstood of all the persons according to the distinct propriety of euery of them. For the holy

ly Ghoſt praieth in vs, as appeareth by the ſaying of the Apoſtle; The ſpirit maketh requeſt for the Saints according to the will of God. The Sonne offereth our praier to the Father. This praier the Father receiueth, and louingly heareth. Therefore, lawfull and true praier is that which is made from the heart, the holy Ghoſt ſtirring vs vp, which alſo is directed to the Father in the name of Ieſus Chriſt his Sonne. Indeed we haue an example in the holy Scriptures of a certaine praier made to the Sonne, in the which this diſtinction of the perſons is not obſerued: namely in that which STEVEN made while he was ſtoned: Lord Ieſus receiue my ſpirit. Howbeit this example, and if there be any ſuch other, is not contrary to the rule of right praying. But becauſe we haue begun the expoſition of the Lords praier, we are to returne to the iſſue of the ſpeech we haue in hand: and it is this, that in this place wee bee taught that our praiers muſt bee directed to the Father: which PAVL teſtifieth that himſelfe did, in theſe words: I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. We may alſo pray vnto Chriſt, not onely as he is God, but alſo as he is the Mediatour, that is, as he is one perſon conſiſting of two natures: yet ſo, as the Deity be the obiect or the thing which wee ſet before our eies in praying. Likewiſe alſo we may pray to the holy Ghoſt, diſtinguiſhed from the other perſons, who with the Father and the Sonne is very God. And indeed the godly that exerciſe themſelues in ſuch praiers, doe a thing profitable and worthy to bee done, ſo as they be not diſtracted with the deepe meditation of the diſtinction of the three perſons, but alwaies haue their minds fixed and ſetled vpon the vnity of the eſſence. This alſo is to be obſerued, that the name of God, & of father, is not ſeldome in the Scripture referred to each of the perſons. And let theſe things be ſpoken by the way. For it is not my purpoſe at this time, to declare all things particularly that appertaine vnto this place.

Rom. 8. 27.

Act. 7. 59.

Eph 3. 14.

Theoph. But why doth Chriſt command vs, that comming to his father, we ſhould cal him by the name of our father?

Mat. Not onely that we ſhould gather, ſeeing he is the Father of Chriſt, that he is alſo our Father: but eſpecially for three cauſes.

1. First, that we may call vpon him with true faith, that is, that we may beleeue that he which is our father will not deny vs the things which we shall aske of him, according to that saying of Christ; What man is there of you, who if his sonne shall aske bread of him, will giue him a stone; and if he shall aske fish, will giue him a serpent?

Math. 7. 9. 10. 11.

2. Another cause is, that wee might vnderstand (which hath beene already said of vs) that wee ought not to draw neere vnto God, but in the name of his naturall Sonne Iesus Christ. For in him alone we are adopted and made his children.

3. The third, when we are commanded to call him our father in common, rather then particularly and properly, my father, we be taught, that true charitie and brotherly loue towards our neighbours is required of vs in praier, forasmuch as we be all the children of the same father, and heires of one and the selfe same inheritance. Whosoeuer therfore make not their praiers to God in the name of Iesus Christ, or do carry priuy hatred or enmity against their brethren, cannot pray to God with this forme of praier.

Theoph. Why hath Christ added these words; Which art in heauen?

Mat. Not to signifie that his Maiestie is shut vp within heauen: which indeede (seeing it is infinite) the whole world is not able to containe: But

1. That hee may be destinguished from our earthly fathers, and that withall wee might vnderstand how much better he is then they, and more able to helpe vs. Therefore Christ said to his Disciples; If ye therefore which are euil, can giue good gifts to your children, how much more wil your Father that is in heauen giue good things to them that aske them of him?

Math. 7. 11.

2. Secondly, those words are added, that comming to God, wee should lift vp our minds aboue all earthly and transitory things, how beautifull or goodly soeuer.

3. Finally, that we might earnestly and indeede acknowledge the incomprehensible greatnesse, the maruellous wisedom, and infinite power of him, whom we pray vnto: which verily doe farre more clearely shine in the heauens, then in the earth, to the end we might worship him with the

the more reuerence, and reſt vpon him with greater truſt and aſſurance.

The ſecond Petition.

Hallowed be thy name.

Theoph. Let vs come to the three petitions that reſpect the glorie of God. Which is the firſt of them?

Mat. It is contained in theſe words; Hallowed be thy name.

The expoſition of the firſt petition.

Theoph. What is the meaning of it?

Mat. We deſire of God, that the knowledge of him may be ſpread abroad throughout the whole world, that ſo his name may be ſanctified, that is, that all men may giue him his due honor.

Theoph. Wherefore makeſt thou mention of the knowledge of God, which Chriſt mentioneth not in this petition?

Mat. Becauſe God cannot be truely hallowed and worſhipped, except the knowledge of him goe before. For we cannot worſhip nor praiſe him, of whom we be ignorant, and whoſe excellency and power are vnknowne to vs. Hence is that ſaying of the Prophet; According to thy name (ô God) ſo is thy praiſe vnto the worlds end. Pſal. 48. 10.

Theoph. Is not this hallowing of the name of God, the ſame with that whereof thou ſpakeſt in the expoſition of the third commandement?

Mat. The very ſame; and therefore the expoſition of that commandement, may be in ſtead of an expoſition to this petition, and ſhew how the name of God is to be hallowed.

The ſecond Petition.

Thy kingdome come.

Theo. Let vs paſſe ouer to the ſecond petition.

Mat. It is this; Thy kingdome come. Now in it we deſire of God, that by the knowledge of his Maieſtie being giuen vnto men, he will cauſe all to be gathered into the Church. For in it he reigneth by the ſcepter of his word, and by the power of his Spirit.

The expoſition of the ſecond petition.

Theoph. That I may the more eaſily come to the true meaning

meaning of this petition, I do first demand of thee wherefore that rule and dominion which God exerciseth ouer his Church, is called his kingdome: after I will aske thee, concerning the word COME.

Mat. That rule is called by the name of kingdome, for the likenesse it hath with earthly kingdomes.

Of the kingdome of God

Theoph. Wherein standeth that likenesse?

Mat. In foure heads or principall points, namely because in the Church there be

1. One King.
2. Subiects.
3. Lawes.
4. Gouernors; who, as in earthly kingdomes, haue the charge to see to the keeping of those lawes. For, in the Church there is one king, namely Iesus Christ, who by his Father is appointed Lord ouer it, to rule and gouerne it; which is confirmed by the words of the Angell to MARY: The Lord God will giue vnto him the seate of his father DAVID, & he shal reigne ouer the house of IACOB for euer, and there shall be no end of his kingdome. Therefore the kingdome of God and the kingdome of Christ, is one and the selfe same. The faithfull be the people of this kingdom, whom Christ hath redeemed with his death, and set free from the tyranny of the diuell, that he might deliuer them vp to his owne kingdome, to become his subiects. The lawes of it are the word of God, wherein all things be commanded and declared, that appertaine either to the humble seruice and obedience of that king, or to the concord of the Citizens and subiects. The officers which are specially occupied about this kingdome, are the Ministers of the word, or Pastors: vpon whom this charge is laide, that they preach the word, and see to the keeping of those lawes. Who also (as the Apostle speaketh) haue in readinesse reuenge against all disobedience.

Luke 1.13.

2. Cor. 10 6

Theoph. I haue heard of the likenesse betweene the kingdome of God and the kingdome of men: now I desire to vnderstand wherein they differ.

Mat. 1. First, all the things in the kingdome of God are spirituall: namely, the king himselfe, his glory, power, subiects, lawes, rewards, punishments of the rebels. Therfore

Christ

Christ said vnto PILATE; my kingdom is not of this world Ioh. 18. 36.

2. Secondly, Christ requireth no such thing of his subiects, as earthly kings are wont to aske: but contrariwise doth continually enrich them with his owne gifts, and spirituall riches.

3. Thirdly, he maketh them all partakers of his kingly dignitie, which earthly kings cannot doe.

4. Fourthly, hee doth not onely command, as other kings do, but giueth his own Spirit, which putteth power into vs, whereby we are made able to yeeld our humble and dutifull obedience vnto his commandements.

Finally, all their kingdomes bee subiect vnto alteration and change, but this kingdome is inuincible, and shall endure vntill the last comming of Christ.

Such is the kingdome of God and of Christ, which in deed (as hath bin said) is not to be referred but to that rule which he exerciseth ouer his beloued children, and those that be receiued into the Church.

Theoph. Who therefore hath the rule ouer the vnbeleeuers and wicked?

Mat. The diuell: and for this cause, hee is called the Prince of this world; yet notwithstanding the Lord hath the chiefe rule and power, both ouer the vnbeleeuers, and ouer their captaine, which by his iust iudgment hath made them subiects to that vnbeleeuing tyrant: to the end they may be vexed & tormented of him according to their deserts, forasmuch as they haue refused to obey Christ, who is a most louing & merciful king. Moreouer, that kingdom of Sathan hath immortall hatred against the kingdome of Christ; the head (I say) of that kingdome namely, Sathan and his souldiers, whom hee stirreth vp to make outward warre against the kingdome of Christ, while hee in the meane time assaulteth it within. For both of them labour and striue with all their might, to spoile & sacke that kingdome of Christ. But they do it in vaine: for, how much the more furiously they seeke to ouerthrow it, so much the more do they helpe it forward: and at length pull vpon themselues vtter ruine and destruction. The kingdome of Sathan.

Theoph. We haue beene long enough in the exposition of the kingdome of God: let vs goe forward to the other member

member. What meaneth that word; Let it come, or let it approach?

How the kingdome of God commeth.

Mat. The office of a good king ſtandeth in two ſpeciall things;

1. Firſt, to rule his ſubiects (that is to ſay, ſuch as are loyall and obedient) to keepe them in peace, defend, deale mercifully and louingly with them, and to redeeme them if they be taken captiues.

2. Secondly, to puniſh the rebels, and to deſtroy and throw downe the enemies of his kingdome. When therefore wee deſire of God that his kingdome may come, wee doe as if we praied, that he would increaſe the number of beleeuers, enlarge his Church euery day, more and more heape vpon it his gifts, and ſettle it with right order: and contrariwiſe, that hee would cut off all the enemies of it, ouerthrow their counſels, deſtroy their purpoſes, and that the defending of the Church may be euery day increaſed, till at length it come to the higheſt perfection. Howbeit, that ſhall not bee before the day of iudgement; at which time all his enemies being ouercome, hee ſhall make them his footſtoole. And then (as the Apoſtle ſaith) he ſhall deliuer vp the kingdome to God the Father, that is, he ſhall reigne quietly without any rebellion and reſiſtance, and wee ſhall liue peaceably in him, being deliuered from all feare and trouble of enemies.

1. Cor. 15. 24.

The third Petition.

Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heauen.

Theoph. Let vs come to the third petition, being the laſt of them that reſpect the glory of God.

Mat. It is this; Thy will be done in earth as it is in heauen. Wherein indeed we do not ſimply deſire of God, that his will may be done, the fulfilling whereof there is verily nothing that can let: but that he will ſo guide vs with his ſpirit, that we may be ready to do his will, reuealed vnto vs in his word, & that with no leſſe deſire than the heauenly Angels do. But concerning his ſecret will; we deſire that if when it be done, any aduerſities befall vs, namely loſſe of goods, hinderance, afflictions, whether they concerne the ſoule or the body, we may beare them all patiently as ſent from

from his hand, and so obey his will, that ours may wholly and altogether giue place vnto it.

Theoph. Indeed hee were happy, that after this manner should conforme himselfe to the will of God.

Mar. Yea surely, because he might worthily glory in this, that God did nothing but that which hee would, seeing that he would no other thing but that which were acceptable and pleasing to God. And assuredly there bee many things that call vs vnto that. For, if God our heauenly Father be wiser than we (which all men do confesse) it is not to be doubted, but hee knoweth what wee haue neede of, better than our selues; and that therefore by good right, we ought to preferre his holy and good will before our owne, which is wicked and corrupt; yea rather often like vnto children, wee know not what wee would haue. For many times we change our purposes, and forthwith or a little after, we disallow that, which a little before we very greatly allowed of. For this cause the Lord, without any respect of our will and intents, as a good father, sendeth those things, which he knoweth to be necessary, both for his owne glory, and for our profit and saluation: which indeed are to be receiued with a quiet and thankfull minde as from his hand, vnlesse wee meane to be miserable for euer: which we shall neuer escape, so long as we cleaue to our owne will. Of Christian Patience.

Theo. I haue long since laboured to performe this, but as yet I haue not attained it: but especially, I finde by experience, that the vse of this doctrine is most hard when any great trouble commeth, whether it be of body or minde.

Theoph. It is not onely hard, but verily cannot be generally brought to practise, especially if respect be had of our owne flesh, which maruellously pleaseth it selfe in the own will and affections, and seeketh for nothing else but delights and pleasures. For this cause, in this place Christ teacheth vs to desire it of his Father: but IAMES assureth, that we shall receiue it, so as wee aske it in faith; If any of you lacke wisedome, let him aske it of God, which giueth it liberally vnto all, and casteth no man in the teeth, and it shall be giuen vnto him. But let him aske in faith, not doubting. Iam. 1.5.

Theoph.

Theop. In that place IAMES speaketh of wisedome, but we speake of patience.

Mat. There is no doubt, but by the word wisedome, he vnderstandeth patience, whereunto hee had exhorted the faithfull in the former verse, in these words; Let patience haue her perfect worke, that you may be perfect and entire, so as nothing be wanting.

But because wee cannot doe it of our selues, heere hee sheweth by what meanes wee haue it from God; when he saith; If any man lacke wisedome, let him aske it of God, which giueth it to all men liberally.

Theoph. But what is the cause, that he calleth patience by the name of wisedome?

Mat. To the end wee might vnderstand, that a mans chiefe wisedome standeth herein, that in his aduersities and troubles hee patiently submit himselfe to the will of God: but on the contrary side, that it is the extreamest foolishnesse and madnesse, if any dare resist and set himselfe against it. For what good doth hee by it? Can hee change the will of God? No verily. Nay rather he maketh his own case worse, as well with inward griefe that tormenteth him, as also because hee pulleth the wrath of God vpon himselfe. For by our stubbornnesse he is compelled to lay more grieuous punishments vpon vs. On the other side, by our patience he is mooued vnto pitie, so as he turneth our afflictions into kindnesse, and doing vs good; euen as good parents are wont, when they perceiue that their children be brought into good order by their corrections.

Theoph. I see it is a thing profitable and necessarie: howbeit, I thinke that the meditation of the things which thou declarest (when we spake of afflictions) doe make not a little for this purpose.

Mat. Thou iudgest rightly. For in that place we deliuered many things which may worke exceeding great comfort in the hearts of the faithfull. Neuertheless, I will adde vnto them two other besides, as an ouerplus.

1. First, when wee bee ouerladen with afflictions, the euils which wee suffer are not so much to bee considered, as those which wee haue deserued, and yet notwithstanding, be not laid vpon vs. Furthermore, wee must thinke vpon

vpon the good things which the Lord heapeth vpon vs, on the other ſide: and ſo indeed we ſhall finde, that God dealeth moſt mercifully euen in the middeſt of our afflictions, if they bee examined according to the greatneſſe of our ſinnes.

2. Secondly, that we are not to looke vpon them onely, who in outward ſhew bee a little happier than wee, and whome wee ſee to bee exempted from the troubles wherewith we are grieued; but vpon infinite and innumerable others, which are in farre greater miſeries, than are thoſe that wee ſuffer, whoſe ſinnes notwithſtanding are not ſo great as ours.

Theoph. I doe very much reioyce that I haue heard theſe two things: for I will daily make vſe of them, as occaſion ſhall ſerue.

Mat. Thou ſpeakeſt wiſely, when thou addeſt the word DAILY. For the Lord our maſter, that we ſhould not forget this doctrine ſo profitable, is wont oftentimes to beate it into our heads, by ſending of troubles, wherein wee might practiſe it. And verily wee ought to bee well acquainted with it, ſeeing we are ſo often exerciſed in it.

Theoph. But I for my part doe finde it true by daily experience, that I am very little exerciſed in it. Neuertheleſſe I hope, that by the grace of God, I ſhall profit better in it than heretofore I haue done: eſpecially, ſeeing now I know the way how I may doe it, namely to craue it of God by daily praiers, and continually to haue in minde the things which thou haſt ſaid. But now, foraſmuch as I haue heard the meaning of this third Petition, which is the laſt of thoſe that concerne the glory of God, let vs goe forward to the reſt. But before I come to the three following which concerne our own good and ſaluation, I would haue thee to declare the order of theſe petitions, and withall, how fitly they be ioyned together.

The coherence and ſumme of the three former petitions of the Lords praier.

Mat. Theſe former agree together moſt excellently, foraſmuch as they be of the ſame kinde. For, after that we are made partakers of the knowledge of God, by the which we are mooued to enter into his kingdome, that is, into his Church, it is meete & conuenient, that we ſhould deſire to be informed and taught the obedience of his will, where-

whereunto the miniſtery of the Church calleth vs daily.

Finally, in theſe three petitions, wee deſire of God to giue men ſuch knowledge of his Maieſty, as they may willingly ſubmit themſelues to his kingdome and rule, and from their hearts obey his pleaſure; that ſo he may be glorified of them, and in them.

The fourth Petition.

Giue vs this day our daily bread.

The ſumme of the laſt three petitions.

Theoph. Wee are to come to the three laſt petitions of the Lords prayer, wherein we ſay thoſe things were contained which concerne both our ſoule and body.

Mat. True: for the firſt of them comprehendeth the things that bee neceſſarie to the paſſing thorow or finiſhing of this life: but the other two, thoſe that appertaine to our ſaluation.

Theoph. Recite therefore the firſt.

Mat. Giue vs this day our daily bread.

Theoph. What is the meaning of it?

The expoſition of the fourth petition.

Mat. To the end we may ſerue God according to our calling; in this petition wee deſire of him, to giue vs our daily bread, that is, that euery day he would miniſter vnto vs thoſe things that bee neceſſarie for this life: for all thoſe bee comprehended vnder the name of bread, as being a thing moſt neceſſarie. Howbeit, this is to be noted, that (while wee aske of God our daily bread) wee doe alſo deſire ſuch things as be requiſite and neceſſarie, that wee may eate it in peace and quietneſſe.

Therefore this petition generally containeth whatſoeuer can be deſired for our peaceable, calme, vndiſtreſſed, and good eſtate in this world. Neuertheleſſe, wee ought to depend and hang vpon the pleaſure of our heauenly Father. For he will giue vs ſuch things, as hee ſhall know to bee for the furtherance of his owne glorie, and our ſaluation. And hereupon it may bee gathered, why he would haue vs to aske bread onely: namely, that wee might know, that bread ought to ſuffice vs, if the Lord ſhall ſee it good, to giue vs no other thing to nouriſh vs.

Theoph. There doe fiue principall points come into my minde,

minde, concerning this thy exposition of daily bread, whereof I will aske thee.

The first whereof is this; why wee pray to haue daily bread giuen vs? seeing we are commãded to prouide vs, by our honest labor, such things as be necessary for this life. 1

Mat. Because our labour shall be to no purpose except the blessing of God be added vnto it; euen as the Psalmist expressely teacheth.

Theoph. Wherefore are wee commanded to craue that bread, which we call *our*? 2

Mat. The word *our* was added, for two causes. The first, that we might vnderstand, that that bread is promised of God, and therefore, by good right, called ours: and hereby we might be assured, that it cannot be denied vs. The other, to the end we might remember, that that bread is to be prouided by lawfull meanes and waies, and such as bee allowed of God; but not by theft or deceit. For otherwise wee eat not our owne bread, but another mans; receiued not from God, but from the Diuell.

Theo. The third point followeth: why are these words added; This day, and daily? 3

Mat. That we might altogether, and wholly depend vpon the prouidence of God, so as we should not be carefull for things to come, as if wee did distrust; but be content with those that be necessary for our present need, with this hope, that the Lord will prouide for the morrow.

Theoph. I come to the fourth point: How well agreeth it, that they which haue plenty of things, and whose barns and store-houses be full, should aske their daily bread? 4

Mat. Because we must hold it for a certainty and truth, that bread of it selfe cannot nourish, except the blessing of God be added. For sometimes rich men are seene worne and pined away with leanneſſe: for this cause *Moses* saith; Man liueth not by bread onely, but by euery word that commeth out of the mouth God. In which words, the Prophet doth also signifie this, that the power of God doth not so cleaue vnto bread, that he cannot nourish vs without it, as oft as shall please him. Whereof he gaue the Israelites a singular proofe, whom he led in the wildernes by the space of forty yeeres, without bread.

Theoph. The last point is behinde. Why doth Christ command vs to pray for bread in common in these words: Giue vs our bread; rather then priuately, after this manner; Giue me my bread?

Mat. To the end we might know, that we are to pray for it, not for our selues alone, but also for our neighbors, of whose profit and commoditie, Christian charity requireth, that we should be no lesse carefull then of our owne. Moreouer, by this manner of praying, wee are more and more assured, that we shall obtaine the bread which wee pray for; forasmuch as the whole Church doth not onely craue it with vs, but also for vs: euen as we also do craue the same both with it and for it. For we are all the sonnes of one and the same Father, euen as we are taught in the beginning of this prayer, while we say in common; Our Father. For the same cause also, the two petitions following be deliuered in the same forme of words: namely, Forgiue vs our trespasses, and leade vs not into tentation: And they containe all the things that appertaine to the heauenly life, euen as this containeth those which be necessarie for this present life.

Theoph. Wherefore are the things that concerne our saluation, contained in two petitions?

Mat. Because our saluation standeth vpon two parts: The first, that we be reconciled vnto God; and this we desire in the fift petition, which intreateth of the forgiuenesse of our sinnes. The other, that being reconciled vnto him by the forgiuenesse of sins, we be kept in his loue and obedience, so as we obey him, being mindfull of that infinite benefit which he hath bestowed vpon vs.

The fifth petition.

Forgiue vs our trespasses, as we forgiue them that trespasse against vs.

Theoph. The two last petitions doe remaine to be considered of vs. Let vs therefore come to the fifth. What is the meaning of it?

Mat. Because we be all miserable sinners, by reason whereof the Lord is iustly angry with vs, yea rather is so long angry, as our sinnes shall be imputed and laid to our charge

charge before him; in this petition we pray, that for his infinite mercies sake he will forgiue them all; to the end that for the time to come he may fauour vs, being at one with vs, namely, by the forgiuenesse of our sinnes.

Theoph. But why do we craue of God to forgiue vs our sinnes, for the which Christ hath most fully satisfied: seeing there is no place for forgiuenesse, where satisfaction is made?

Mat. If the satisfaction were of our selues, this were indeed true: but seeing it is by Christ, which is freely giuen vs of his Father, forgiuenes agreeth necessarily with it: and verily it is as a man condemned in some summe of money were to be cast into prison, vntill he had paid the whole sum, and yet were not able to do it. Whom if the Prince ment to pleasure without any hinderance of the Law, and should freely giue him that, wherein he was to haue beene fined, should he not haue done as much, as if he had forgiuen the offence? He should indeed. And this similitude is most fit: For asmuch as in this petition, our sins be called debts, to the end we might vnderstand, that by them wee are no lesse debters vnto God, than if a man were in great debt vnto another, and yet had not wherewith to pay any thing at all. With this similitude agreeth also that, that is written of *Paul*; Putting out the hand-writing that was a- Col. 2. 14
gainst vs, which was contrary vnto vs, he euen tooke it away, and fastned it vpon the crosse. In which words he teacheth, that Christ hath most fully satisfied for our sinnes.

Theo. The more diligently I consider the mystery of our redemption, so much the more commeth to my remembrance, the infinite maruellous wisdome of God, which by a way altogether wonderful, hath knit or ioyned together his perfect iustice with his perfect mercy, and that aswell to his owne glorie, as to our saluation and benefit.

Mat. True indeed. But if thou do with a little more diligence marke that way, thou shalt find three things which the reason of man could neuer haue deuised, & which out of Christ are found no where else, for the auoiding of the punishment due for our sinnes: and they be these: That we should our selues pay our debts vnto God: or else seeke another, which is both able to pay them, and do also ac-

quit vs of them: or that God himselfe should forgiue vs whatsoeuer we be indebted vnto him.

Theoph. I would haue you declare these things a little more largely.

Mat. First therefore I will shew, that these three cannot any where bee found, saue in Christ. And verily whatsoeuer man can imagine, they shall neuer find themselues wherewith to satisfie God. Who also (as the Apostle saith) hath shut all vnder sinne, that he might haue mercy vpon all.

Rom. 11.32.

Neither shall they finde any creature in heauen or in earth sufficient to do this office. But if they flie vnto God his mercy, to obtaine forgiuenesse of their sins, his perfect iustice will be a let, which requireth to be fully satisfied.

Theo. Let vs now see, how God hath ioyned these three things together in Christ, to reconcile his exceeding great mercy with his most perfect righteousnesse, vnto our saluation.

Mat. Being made one with Christ by faith, and therefore also partakers of that which is his, wee our selues pay al our debts vnto God, & that out of the riches of Christ, which are truly made ours. And by this means, the perfect iustice of God is fully satisfied, which indeed requireth this, that he which oweth the debt should pay it. Neuertheless another hath paid it for vs, namely Christ, who alone hath drunke of the cup of his wrath, and (as the Apostle saith) hath borne our sins in his body vpon the tree. And therin most manifestly appeareth the great mercy of God, that gaue his most deerely beloued Sonne for vs his enemies vnto a most shamefull death.

1 Pet. 2.24.

Finally, because hee that hath satisfied the heauenly Father for vs, is his dearely beloued Son, and eternall God with the Father, freely giuen vnto vs; the continuall forgiuenesse of sinnes (as hath been said) is ioined with his satisfaction, and that doth especially make stedfast and sure his immeasurable mercie.

Theoph. Verily a notable discourse, and very full of comfort. Let vs now returne to the exposition of our petition: Why is this clause added in the end, As wee forgiue them that trespasse against vs?

Mat.

Mat. That is, according to the promise made vs of the forgiuenesse of our sinnes, vpon this condition, that wee forgiue them that hurt vs. And Christ would haue it expressly mentioned, because hee knew how hardly wee forgiue others their trespasses. Therefore in this clause he calleth vs to remember that we shall not obtaine forgiuenes of our sinnes at the hands of God, except we also forgiue our neighbors their offences. Hereupon is that threatning of God by the Prophet against the Israelites; When you shall stretch out your hands, I wil hide mine eies from you, although you make many praiers I will not heare you; for your hands are full of bloud. Esa. 1. 15.

Theoph. Therefore this manner of speech doth not note an equality; as if God forgaue vs so much onely as we shal forgiue.

Mat. No not so. For, our forgiuenesse, euen as we our selues be imperfect, is; alwaies imperfect, and sauoureth of the vncleanesse of our flesh: whereupon it commeth to passe, that euen in them that are most regenerated, notwithstanding they doe vnfainedly forgiue as God requireth, & desire no reuenge, yea rather be ready to doe good vnto such as haue hurt them, and doe daily pray for them: yet there remaineth some bitternesse, so as we do not embrace them with that affection of heart, which we would haue embraced them with, if wee had alwaies beene well pleasd with them: which if God should doe, wee were in very ill case

Therefore this is the meaning of this petition; O Lord according to thy promise forgiue vs our sinnes fully and perfectly, as a most perfect God; seeing that we being most imperfect men, according to thy commaundement haue forgiuen them that haue hurt vs.

Theoph. In what place are this commandement and promise?

Mat. They be presently added by Christ after this praier in these words; If you forgiue men their offences, your heauenly Father wil also forgiue you: But if you shall not forgiue men their offences, neither wil your father forgiue you your offences. Mat. 6. 14.

Theoph. I grant it is very right, that we should doe those

things to our neighbours, which wee desire to be done to our selues; and so that God doth most worthily deny them forgiuenesse, that will not forgiue their neighbours.

Mat. True: especially seeing our sinnes against God, whereof we craue pardon, are farre more grieuous, and farre more in number then are they which our neighbors can euer commit against vs. And this doth Christ plainly teach in an excellent parable, when he saith: The Kingdome of heauen is like vnto a King, which would demand an account of his seruants: and when he began to reckon, there was one brought vnto him which ought ten thousand talents. And when he was not able to pay it, his Lord commanded him to bee sold, and his wife and children, and all that he had, and the debt to be paied. The seruant therefore fell downe and besought him, saying; Master, appease thine anger toward me, and I will pay thee all. Then that seruants Master had compassion vpon him, and loosed him, and forgaue him the debt: but when the seruant was departed, he found one of his fellows that ought him an hundred pence, and he laid hands vpon him, and tooke him by the throat, saying; Pay me that thou owest. Then his fellow fell downe at his feet, and besought him, saying, Appease thine anger toward mee, and I will pay thee all: yet he would not, but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt. And when his other fellowes saw what was done, they were very sory, and came and declared vnto their Master all that was done. Then his Master called him, and said vnto him: O euil seruant, I forgaue thee all that debt, because thou praiedst me: oughtest thou not also to haue had pity vpon thy fellow, euen as I had pitty on thee? So his Master was wroth, and deliuered him vnto the Iailers, till he should pay all that was due vnto him. So likewise (saith Christ) shal mine heauenly Father do vnto you, except ye forgiue from your harts each one to his brother their trespasses.

Matth. 18. 23.

The sixth Petition.

And leade vs not into temptation, but deliuer vs from euill.

Theoph. The last petition is behind.

Mat.

Mat. Hauing obtained forgiuenesse of sins, we desire of the Lord to be present with vs, that we fall not againe into them, when we say, Leade vs not into temptation, but deliuer vs from euill. For, this we pray, that he wil not giue vs ouer vnto the power of the diuell, to be ouercome of him in temptation as we haue deserued; but contrariwise, that he would strengthen vs against the assaults and deadly subtilties of so great an enemie, that so daily more and more we may endeuour to amend our liues and obey him. The expositi-on of the last petition,

Theoph. When therefore God leadeth men into temptation, doth he not stirre them vp to euill?

Mat. Not so. For that is altogether vnworthy of his Maiestie, and is contrary to his diuine nature.

For this cause *Iames* saith; Let no man when he is tempted, say he is tempted of God. For God cannot be tempted with euill, neither doth he tempt any man. But euery one is tempted, while he is drawen aside and snared of his own concupiscence. Iam. 1. 13.

Therefore as God in mercy defendeth the faithfull, and suffereth them not to be deceiued or mastered of the diuel, so as to bee ouercome of sinne: so on the contrary side, such as he meaneth to punish, he deliuereth ouer to the diuell as to a tormentor, to be ouercome and vanquished of him in temptation. In which sense the Apostle saith, that they which glorifie not God, are giuen vp to the lusts of their owne hearts. Which neuertheless he doth without any allowance of sinne, as hath beene said in his place. Rom. 1. 24.

Theo. So far as I see, God punisheth sinnes with sinnes.

Mat. Yea verily: but by a way diuers from that whereof I spake, when wee entreated of afflictions: in which place we said, that God sometimes stirreth vp one, who committeth that sinne against vs, which we our selues had committed against another: an example wherof we haue in *Dauid*. He had defiled the wife of *Vriah*: the Lord raised vp his son *Absolon*, to defile his fathers concubines. But of al the temptations which are sent of God, that is the most grieuous, when God deliuereth men vp to the diuell to be ouercome of him in temptation. For then he giueth them ouer into a reprobate sense, that when they haue heaped sinnes vpon sinnes, they may at length run headlong into

eternal deſtruction, except the Lord (which ſometimes he doth) by his migity hand ſtay the courſe of that downfall.

Theo. What meaneth the concluſion added to this praier? For thine is the kingdome, the power and glory, for euer and euer. Amen.

The expoſition of the concluſion.

Mat. It containeth the cauſe for which wee crane all the former things, namely, for that they concerne his kingdome, power, and glory. For, by the firſt three, his kingdome is made manifeſt: and by the laſt three his power is exerciſed; whereupon followeth the increaſe of his glory. Therefore this cõcluſion is added, that we may with more boldnes come vnto God, and crane of him the things we haue ſpoken of, who onely is able to giue them to vs: and that with greater aſſurance we might beleeue that we ſhall obtaine them; foraſmuch as while he beſtoweth them vpon vs, hee declareth himſelfe to bee a moſt mighty king, whereupon enſueth owne glorifying.

Theo. I cannot ſufficiently maruell at this abridgement or breuiarie of praier, alſo the two former, namely of faith and the law; ſeeing that in ſo few words, and in ſo exact order, they containe ſuch hard things, and ſo excellent doctrine.

Mat. Thou doeſt indeede not without cauſe maruell at them. For in them ſhineth the wonderful wiſdom of God, and they doe very well agree together among themſelues, in that order wherein wee haue propounded them. For

Faith.

faith teacheth vs all things that are to bee beleeued vnto our ſaluation: and I ſet it in the firſt place, as it were the foundation of the reſt. But the law, concerning all things

The Law

that bee required to the yeelding of obedience vnto God, followeth in moſt excellent order, as the fruite & witneſſe of faith. Finally in the laſt place commeth praier, becauſe

Praier.

of our ſelues we can neither beleeue, nor do any thing that is pleaſing vnto God; by the which we be taught, by what meanes wee my obtaine both at his hands. And in theſe is contained the ſumme of al Chriſtian doctrine.

Theoph. Before I go to any other thing, I will propound two queſtions concerning the doctrine of praier.

1. Firſt, praier ſeemeth to be vnprofitable, ſeeing wee can by it obtain nothing at the hands of God, beſides that which

which hee hath already determined in his vnchangeable prouidence to giue vs: neither doth he ceaſe to giue it, although we pray not.

2. Secondly, it ſeemeth ſuperfluous, that wee ſhould pray vnto God, to ſhew him what things wee haue neede of, foraſmuch as he knoweth them better then our ſelues. Now it is thy part to anſwer to the former, which concerneth the prouidence of God.

Mat. They bee much deceiued who for this cauſe abſtaine from praier. For the prouidence of God taketh not away ſecond cauſes, ſuch as praier is; yea rather it doth ſtabliſh and ſtrengthen them: for God vſeth them as inſtruments for the performance of that which hee had appointed before. But I remember a ſtory, which if I be not deceiued, will bring light vnto this queſtion. A certaine Noble man well furniſhed with horſes and armour, went to warr; and it fell out that hee tooke his iourney by the houſe of a very faithfull Paſtour of the Church knowen to him long before. This man very earneſtly admoniſhed him to bee diligent in praier, by the which he might mooue the Lord to proſper his enterpriſes. He ſtraightway reaſoneth concerning the prouidence of God, as if hee ſhould haue ſaid, that God had already determined of all things that ſhould come to paſſe: and therefore that his decree could not bee changed by his praiers. That good Miniſter anſwered, I would therefore aduiſe thee to ſend away thy horſes and thy armour, as things vnprofitable, foraſmuch as the iſſue of warre dependeth vpon the prouidence of God, ſo as no other thing can come to paſſe, beſides that which hee hath determined. The ſouldier anſwered, that ſuch as went to warre could not without raſhneſſe lay aſide their armour, becauſe they were inſtruments by the which God is wont to giue the victory to ſuch as it ſeemed good vnto him. The ſame alſo might I ſay of praier (ſaith the Miniſter) by the which the lord vſeth to giue vs the things that be neceſſary, as well for the vſe of this life, as for euerlaſting ſaluation; and therefore that it was no leſſe raſhneſſe, to neglect it vnder the pretence of Gods prouidence, eſpecially ſeeing it is in ſo many places commended of God, with innumerable promiſes made vnto them

Whether the prouidence of God ſhould keepe vs frō praier.

that

that doe often excercise themselues in it: and the Sonne of God himselfe hath giuen vs an example thereof, who also doth command that wee should pray without ceasing. By the which answer that Noble man was not a little edified.

Theo. I may confesse the same of my selfe. Furthermore I doe acknowledge, that hitherto I did neuer know the answer to this question so cleerely, as I haue vnderstood it by this comparison of armor, which indeed I thinke most fit to bring light vnto this doubt. And verily in the meane time it doth not a little agree vnto praier. For praier is vnto vs in stead of spirituall weapons, by the which wee may fight against & ouercome our spirituall enemies, the diuell, the flesh, and sin. Hitherto is referred the saying of *Paul*, I beseech you brethren, for our Lord Iesus Christs sake, and the loue of the Spirit, that yee would striue with me by your praiers to God for me. Moreouer, this reason ought to take place in all the affaires of men: the euent and issue whereof, notwithstanding it depend and hang vpon Gods prouidence, yet are not meanes to bee neglected, which the Lord ministreth vnto vs to doe them by: otherwise God is tempted and despised.

Rome. 15. 30.

Theoph. Let vs come to the other question: what needs wee to craue of God by praier, things necessarie, seeing that he knoweth them farre better than we our selues?

Mat. Although hee doe, yet his will is that wee should obtaine them by daily praiers.

That it is necessary to pray to God, although he know better than our selues, what is expedient for vs.

1. First, that wee may be kept in some feare and reuerence by this outward adoration & worship, by the which also hee meaneth to exercise vs continually in thankfulnesse, that wee may so much the more acknowledge him to be the fountaine of al good things.

2. Secondly, he doth so much the more shew his loue towards vs, when hee doth so farre abase himselfe, that he vouchsafeth to heare our complaints one after another seuerally, that hee may prouide for them, so much as hee shall know to be conuenient. And by this meanes hee enflameth vs to the loue of himselfe, and causeth vs to put al our hope and confidence in him.

3. Thirdly, by that familiar cõmuning or talking with him, he meaneth to make vs well acquainted with his excellent

cellent Maieſty, that we may be bold to flie to him the more freely in all our neceſſities, as vnto our moſt mercifull Father.

4. Laſt of all, he doth this, that we may more and more confeſſe, that whatſoeuer good thing we haue, commeth from him alone, that we ſhould giue him thanks, and vſe it to his glory. For if he giue vs good things vnaſked, wee ſhould eaſily beleeue either that they were from our ſelues, or elſe that they came to vs by chance.

Theoph. While thou ſheweſt me the cauſe why the Lord would haue vs to obtain by praier, the things that he hath determined to giue vs, thou haſt with the ſame labour declared the excellency and worthines of it. For I perceiue, that by it, almoſt the whol firſt table of the law is fulfilled.

Mat. Thou iudgeſt right. For by it, God is acknowledged with the mind, worſhipped with the bodie, and ſanctified and hallowed with the mouth.

Therefore alſo hee requireth praier of vs, as his ſpeciall worſhip: and among all the good things that he beſtoweth vpon vs, it is the greateſt, foraſmuch as by it we may haue acceſſe to his Maieſty, ſo often as we pleaſe. For that good heauenly Father ſuffereth vs comming to him familiarly, and laying open our wants to him, euen as we might doe with ſome familiar friend of ours. Moreouer, as the lawfull vſe of praier is very acceptable to God, and moſt profitable for our ſelues; ſo on the contrary ſide, there is nothing more diſpleaſing vnto God, and that doth more prouoke his wrath, then the abuſe of it.

Theoph. What is that abuſe?

Mat. It may be referred to ſixe heads.

What corruption Satan hath brought into praier.

1. Firſt, when we make our praiers to any others, or vnto himſelfe in any other name, but in the name of Chriſt: and in this Idolaters doe offend, that flie to Angels, or to the Saints receiued into heauen.

2. Secondly, when the power of God is tied to ſome certaine praiers: which ſuperſtitious perſons doe, that number their praiers, who alſo haue certaine ſet formes of praier, which they thinke vnlawfull to exceed.

3. Thirdly, when God is praied to, onely with the mouth, the heart in the meane time being very farre off: by

by the which ſinne, the Maieſtie of God is indeed ſhamefully deſpiſed. But therein they are eſpecially deceiued, that pray in a ſtrange tongue which they vnderſtand not. For it is impoſſible that our minde ſhould attend vpon the things we vnderſtand not.

4. Fourthly, when any prayeth vnto God with a vaine opinion of his owne righteouſneſſe, ſo as hee be no whit touched with the true ſenſe and feeling of his owne miſerie. And therein hypocrites, and iuſtitiaries, do offend; of which number that proud Phariſie was, who in praying, gaue thanks to God, that he was not like to other men.

5. Fiftly, when any impenitent perſon, that indeuoureth not to amend his life, praieth: and this is the moſt common fault of praier, and vſuall alſo with them, which otherwiſe bragge of the profeſſion of the Goſpell. Who notwithſtanding they auoid the foure former faults, yet are not free from this prophaning of the name of God, but doe moſt of all fall into the contempt of it.

Theoph. How?

Mat. Doſt thou aſke? Is not this to contemne his Maieſty, when they pray to God that his name may bee hallowed, which they doe defile through their blaſphemies and curſed oathes?

That his kingdome may come: when they make a ſcorn of the Miniſterie of the Church?

That his will may be done, which they doe euery day ſet themſelues againſt? and which more is, bee in a great fume, if any thing fall out contrary to their owne will?

Craue daily bread, which they get by vnlawfull means?

That hee will forgiue them their ſins, as they forgiue their neighbours; and in the meane time purſue them with deadly hatred that haue done them wrong, and work them all euils and miſchiefe?

That he will not leade them into temptation; but in the meane while purpoſely ſeeke vanities and allurements of the world, whereinto they may be led?

Theoph. But it may bee obiected, that none but meere profane perſons, do the things that be againſt this praier.

Mat. I grant. But if a man doe againſt it in one only point, he doth no leſſe mocke God: for that cannot ſpring from

from any where else, saue from the contempt of his most holy Maiestie, so as he doe it wittingly, and willingly.

Therfore *Iames* saith; Whosoeuer keepeth the whole Law, and yet faileth in one point, is guilty of al. For euen as if one of the vital parts, wherin the life is in a mans body, be hurt, it bringeth death vnto a man, although all the other be well: so falleth he into destruction, that applieth himselfe to some good works, and abstaineth from many sinnes, neuertheless in the meane time continues in some one sinne, and flattereth himselfe in it, and repenteth not. Iam. 2. 10.

Theo. But thou vnderstandest not this, of the sins which we oftentimes commit, through the infirmity of our flesh.

Mat. These things be vnderstood, neither of other, nor of these sins; so as there be repentance and a desire to amend: for then God of his mercy doth pardon and forgiue them all in Christ Iesus.

Theoph. The sixth and last fault in praier is behind.

Mat. When a man praieth without faith, that is, without assurance of being heard: and it is as it were the effect, and that which hangeth vpon the former fiue. Neuertheless, this is a most grieuous sinne: for that distrust must needs arise from this, that we belieue that God either cannot, or will not performe the thing wee pray for; or else that hee heareth not our praiers: which verily cannot come into the minde of any man, but hee denieth either his power, or his goodnesse, or his Godhead.

For this cause *Iames* saith, that euery one should pray with faith, and wauer not: for hee that wauereth, is like a waue of the sea, tost of the winde, and carried away; neither let that man thinke, that hee shall obtaine any thing of God. Christ also saith; Whatsoeuer you shall aske in praier, if you beleeue, you shall receiue it. Iames. 1. 6. Mar. 11. 22.

Theoph. But why doest thou call this fault the effect of the former?

Mat. Because faith cannot stand with idolatry, nor with superstition, nor with prophanenes, nor with hypocrisie, but especially, if there be an euill conscience: for euen the faithfull themselues finde it true by experience in themselues, that they cānot assure themselues that God is mercifull to them to heare their praiers, if through infirmity they

they fall into any ſin, till they be reconciled to him by true repentance. Therefore faith is as it were, the ſoule of true praier: for it comprehendeth all the conditions of it. Moreouer, as by it God is glorified, ſo alſo it is alwaies heard of him. But contrariwiſe, as the fained is deſpiſed, ſo he not onely neuer heareth it, but doth alſo contemne it, and moſt grieuouſly reuengeth the makers of it, as thoſe of whom his moſt holy name is prophaned.

Theoph. This morning thy diſcourſe of good workes did not a little delight mee: but this our diſputation of praier hath very greatly edified and comforted me. And by it in ſumme I haue learned theſe things:

1. How wee ought to pray: namely, that our praiers be directed vnto God from the heart: but yet ſo, that we bee touched with the right feeling of our owne pouertie and miſerie, and with true repentance of our ſinnes.

2. Secondly, what is to be aſked at the hands of God, namely, the things that concerne his glory, and our owne ſaluation and profit.

3. Finally, by what meanes we ſhall obtaine them: euen if they be aſked of vs with faith in the name of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. But I beſeech God our heauenly Father, that the praiers that ſhall be made of vs, may be free from all thoſe euill conditions which thou haſt reckoned vp: that hee himſelfe may be ſo much the more glorified by them, and we daily haue experience of the effect of them: ſo as

He may comfort vs in our aduerſities,
Helpe our neceſſities,
Succour our infirmities,
Bring helpe to our weakeneſſe,
And ſtrengthen vs in his loue and feare,
And finally, confirme vs in the hope of euerlaſting life, through Ieſus Chriſt his Sonne, our moſt beloued Lord.

Mat. So be it.

Now at length, we haue declared the chiefe points of Chriſtian Religion: and I hope by the grace of God, that they which are behind ſhall be handled to morrow. In the meane time, God giue you good night.

Theoph. And you alſo.

The end of the ſecond Booke.

THE

THE THIRD BOOKE OF CHRISTIAN RELIGION:

Intreating of the outward meanes, by the which God bringeth vs to ſaluation.

CHAP. I.

Of the Miniſterie of the Word: by the which the holy Ghoſt begetteth faith in our hearts, keepeth and increaſeth it.

THEOPHILVS.

GOd ſaue you moſt dearely beloued and reuerend brother.

Mat. God ſaue you alſo moſt louing *Theophilus*.

Theoph. Shall it not be troubleſome to thee for vs to returne to the diſputation which we brake off, and to aſſay to bring it to an end?

Mat. Nay rather (*Theophilus*) it ſhall be a moſt pleaſant thing vnto me. Neuertheleſſe, before we come to the matter, I pray God, that as hitherto he hath been with vs, he will alſo be with vs hereafter to the end.

Theoph. So be it. I will in few words repeate our former diſcourſe, that the things which haue been handled already, may be ioined with thoſe that follow.

A brieſe reheatſall of the former bookes.

1. Firſt, hitherto haue been handled the chiefe grounds of our ſaluation, namely, the perfect iuſtice of God, and the deadly ſickneſſe of mans ſinne.

2. Secondly, the moſt perfect remedy of it, euen Ieſus Chriſt.

3. Furthermore, the applying of this remedie vnto vs by faith, by the which we recouer ſpirituall health, that is, we are iuſtified before God, and thereby made partakers of eternall life.

The ſumme of the third booke.

4. And laſt of all, faith, which is wrought in our hearts by the holy Ghoſt that regenerateth vs, together with repentance, from whence good workes doe flow: which indeede bee teſtimonies of our faith; but eſpecially praier. Therfore this one thing remaineth, that we vnderſtand by what

what means the holy Ghoſt doth regenerate or renew vs.

Mat. Peter affirmeth, that we are begotten againe, not
1.Pet.1. of corruptible ſeede, but of incorruptible, by the Word of the liuing God. And therefore we doe by good right ſay, That by it the holy Ghoſt begetteth in vs both faith and repentance.

Theoph. When hath the Word of God that force?

Mat. When it is preached of ſuch as haue a lawfull cal-
Rom.10.13. ling thereto. For *Paul* ſaith, How ſhall they beleeue in him of whom they haue not heard? How therefore without preaching? but how ſhall they preach, except they be ſent?
Rom.10.17. Out of which words he draweth this concluſion; Therefore faith is by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.

Theoph. There be therefore diuers degrees, or ſteps of our ſaluation. For it is plaine by that which hath beene ſaid, that we cannot obtaine it,

1. Vnleſſe we be reconciled to God.

2. But wee cannot bee reconciled to God, without Chriſt.

3. Chriſt without faith we can neuer haue. Loe heere three degrees, and now thou addeſt the fourth;

4. That wee cannot haue faith without the preaching of the Word.

Of the Word preached and receiued by faith.

Mat. So it is. Whoſoeuer therfore deſpiſe the preaching of the Word of God (which is in reſpect of vs the firſt ſtep of our ſaluation) do deſpiſe & contemne their own ſaluation. For the Apoſtle ſaith: After that the world in the wiſ-
1.Cor.1.21. dome of God knew not God by his wiſedome (that is, by the frame and workmanſhip of this world, by the which God maketh manifeſt his exceeding power and wiſedom) it pleaſed God by fooliſh preaching to ſaue beleeuers.

Theoph. Why calleth he preaching fooliſh, which in the former verſe he had ſo highly extolled?

Mat. Hee doth that according to the opinion of men, of whom for the moſt part it is deſpiſed, no otherwiſe than if it were fooliſhneſſe: notwithſtanding hee teacheth, that with God it is the greateſt wiſedome, vnto thoſe of whom it is receiued and entertained with due reuerence. Which Chriſt confirmeth, when he ſaith; The kingdome of heauen is like a treaſure hidden in the field, which whē a man found

found hee hid it, and for ioy of it, hee goeth away, and selleth all he hath, and buyeth that field.

Theoph. But in those parables, Christ intreateth not of the preaching of the word, but of the kingdom of heauen, which indeede he saith is like vnto sundry things.

Mat. It is not to be doubted, but that by the name of the kingdome of heauen, he doth vnderstand the preaching of the word: and this is easily gathered euen out of the former parables, wherein he speaketh of the seed; for in them by the interpretation of Christ himselfe, the preaching of the word is meant.

Theoph. Why is the preaching of the word called of Christ by the name of the kingdome of heauen?

Mat. To the end he might shew, that it is as it were a key, by the which the gate of the kingdome of heauen is opened vnto vs. Which thing in another place hee confirmeth, when he calleth the ministery of the word, the keies of the kingdome of heauen? Math. 16. 19.

Theoph. Now I desire to heare of thee what Christ meaneth by those parables of the treasure hidden in the field, and of that precious pearle, for the purchasing whereof, he counselleth vs to sell all we haue.

Mat. This is his minde; That the ministery of the word farre excelleth all earthly riches, and that therefore it is to bee preferred before all our goods: yea rather that they ought all to be forsaken, than to suffer our selues to be depriued of it.

A most profitable admonition to such as heare the preaching of the word.

But in hearing the word, we must diligently take heede of two extremities, whereinto Sathan laboureth all hee can to bring vs, that so he may take from vs the fruit which we are to reape of the preaching of the word. The one is the contempt of him which preacheth the word. The other, when wee attribute or giue vnto him more than is right.

Theoph. What discommoditie haue wee by the former of the two extremities?

Mat. That we haue no fruite of his preaching, whose person we despise. For the contempt of the doctrine doth necessarily follow the contempt of his person. For this cause PAVL, meaning to cõmend Pastors in respect of the Isa 52. 7. Rom. 10. 15.

excellency of their office, applieth vnto them this ſaying of ESAY; How beautifull are the feete of them that preach peace, and bring tidings of good things!

Theoph. What diſcommodity ariſeth of the other extreamity?

Mat. When too much is aſcribed to the perſon of him which preacheth the word, it followeth, that the force of preaching is attributed vnto his perſon. And therefore when that is yeelded to men that is due vnto God, men ſpoile themſelues of the fruit of the Miniſtery. And this is that wherin in former times the Corinthiãs offẽded, whẽ one ſaid, I am PAVLS; I am APOLLOES; I am of CEPHAS; & I am CHRISTS: which miſchiefe, that the Apoſtle might remedy, he beateth downe the perſons of the Miniſters in theſe words; Who then is PAVL, and who is APOLLOS, but the Miniſters by whom you haue beleeued? I haue planted, APOLLOS hath watered, but God hath giuen the increaſe. Therefore, ſaith he, neither is he that planteth, any thing, neither he that watereth, but God that giueth the increaſe. For this cauſe the ſame Apoſtle ſaith; God hath put the treaſure of preaching in earthen veſſels, that the excellency of that power might be of God, and not of vs. That is to ſay, God for the moſt part ſendeth Miniſters of abiect and baſe condition, that their excellency ſhould not darken the power which he ſheweth forth by their miniſtery.

1.Cor.1.12.

1.Cor.3.5.

2.Cor.4.7.

Theoph. Now I ſee the inconueniences whereunto thoſe two extreamities do carry vs. Which that we may auoide, the meane muſt be held and kept, namely, that we honour the Miniſters for their office committed vnto them, and their preaching, in reſpect of God, whoſe power is manifeſted by it.

Mat. Thou iudgeſt rightly. For we muſt do as if a king ſhould ſend vs ſome gift by the meaneſt of his ſeruants. For we wold entertaine him honourably, in conſideration of the gift brought by him: but the gift it ſelfe we would receiue for the kings ſake, that ſent it.

Theoph. Let vs goe forward. I deſire that thou wouldeſt ſhew, what is the vſe of Preaching, after that the holy Ghoſt by it hath wrought in vs faith and repentance.

Mat. That both may be preſerued in vs, yea rather increaſed

creaſed. For as a young childe after he is borne, ſtandeth in need of nouriſhment, that life may both bee preſerued and increaſed: ſo he that is begotten anew by the ſeede of the Word of God, muſt be fed by the ſame, that he may get ſtrength, and ſpirituall increaſe, till, ſaith the Apoſtle, wee come to a perfect man, and to the meaſure of the age of the fulneſſe of Chriſt; that is, till we come to perfection it ſelfe, whereto indeed we ſhall neuer come, ſo long as wee liue in this world.

What the vſe of preaching is, after we haue faith & repentance. Epheſ. 4. 13.

Theoph. Is not the reading of the word of God ſufficient for theſe things, although there be no preaching?

Mat. No not ſo: euen as the vſe of meats is not ſufficient to the nouriſhment of mans bodie, except they bee dreſſed and prepared. For which cauſe verily, God when he would threaten an extreame puniſhment to his people, ſaith; Behold the daies come that I will ſend a famine into the land, nor a famine of bread, nor a thirſt of water, but of hearing the word of God. Amos 8. 11.

By the which words he meaneth, that we cannot be ſpiritually fed, without preaching. Yet neuertheleſſe the often reading of the word of God, bringeth no little helpe to the preaching of it. For otherwiſe it ſhould neuer haue beene ſo diligently commended of God.

Whereby it appeareth, that the holy Ghoſt, after he hath by the vncorrupt ſeede of the word of God, wrought in vs faith and repentance, confirmeth, and as it were nouriſheth them, both by the preaching and reading of the ſame word, and by the vſe of the Sacraments, ordained of God for the ratifying and ſealing of it.

Theoph. Wee will therefore ſpeake of the Sacraments when we ſhall haue handled two queſtions appertaining to the preaching of the word.

1. The firſt is, concerning the calling of the Paſtors, to whom this preaching is committed. Of the calling of the Miniſters of the word.

2. The other is, of the word that they are to preach. I will therefore begin with the firſt. For what cauſe ſaidſt thou, that the Paſtors ought to bee lawfully called to preach that word?

Mat. The cauſe is moſt euident. For euen as in a kingdome well ordered, there is no man which ought or may

exerciſe any publike office but by the commandement of the King: ſo none ought or can bee accounted a true Paſtor in the Church of God to preach his word, except hee be by him called with a lawfull calling. For how can wee beleeue, that God ratifieth that which a mortall man doth with vs, vnleſſe it be firſt certainly knowen that hee hath his commiſſion from him?

Theoph. What is that lawfull vocation or calling?

Vocation of miniſters two fold.

Mat. It is two-fold.

The one extraordinary.

The other ordinary.

Theoph. What is that extraordinary calling?

Mat. When any is called immediately of God: ſuch as was the calling of the Apoſtles.

Theoph. What is the meaning of the word Apoſtle?

Ioh.20.21. Extraordinarie calling.

Mat. It is a Greeke word, which ſignifieth ſent, and they were called by that name, to declare their office: namely becauſe they were ſent of God by Chriſt, to preach the Goſpell throughout the whole world. Therefore Chriſt ſaid vnto them; As my Father ſent mee, ſo doe I ſend you.

Theoph. Why calleſt thou that calling extraordinary?

Mat. Becauſe God vſeth it extraordinarily, and that onely for a time, namely when the Churches are not yet ſetled and eſtabliſhed: as in the time of Chriſt, when the Goſpell was knowen ſcarſe to any mortall man.

Theoph. This therefore thou meaneſt; After the Churches be planted and ſetled, that the ordinary calling ſhould ſucceede the extraordinarie, to the end it may haue place in them.

Mat. Yea verily.

Theoph. Let vs now therefore intreate of that ordinarie calling: and firſt ſhew what it is.

Mat. It is two-fold:

Ordinarie calling.

1. Inward, and 2. Outward.

Theoph. What is the inward calling?

Mat. That holy deſire which any hath in the miniſterie of the Church, to ſerue the glory of God, wherewith he is mooued to prepare himſelfe to the faithfull execution of that office, when he ſhall be called thereunto with the outward calling.

Theoph.

Theoph. What is that outward calling?

Mat. The lawfull choice of a visible Church, met together in the name of Christ. For he hath promised, if but two or three be gathered together in his name, to be present in the middest of them After this maner were the Pastors of the primitiue Church called to the ministerie: and this is the true dore of Christs sheepfold, wherof mention is made in IOHN in these words: Verily, verily, I say vnto you, he that entreth not in by the dore into the fold of the sheepe, but climeth vp another way, is a theefe & a robber. Iohn 10. 1.

Theoph. How many things be required, that the choice of the Church may be lawfull?

Mat. Three: First, that there be a search and triall both of the conuersation, and also of the learning of him that is to be chosen. And this indeede is necessarily required in a minister, as PAVL expressely warneth; A Bishop must be faultlesse as Gods Steward: not frowardly pleasing himselfe, not angry, nor giuen to wine, no striker, nor couetous of filthy gaine, but giuen to hospitality, a louer of those that are good, temperat, iust, holy, sober, holding fast that faithfull word which serueth to doctrine, that he may also be able to exhort with holsome doctrine, and to conuince the gain-saiers. Three things required in the lawfull calling of a Minister. Tit. 1. 7.

Theoph. Is the office of a Bishop the same with the office of a Pastor?

Mat. Yea altogether. For when PAVL calleth them by that name, they be put in remembrance of their dutie, as also by other names, by the which they bee called euerie where in the Scriptures, as Ministers, Shepheards, Elders.

Theoph. Let vs therefore weigh the signification, and reason of these names.

Mat. First of all, the name of Bishop, which signifieth an especiall, or one that watcheth, admonisheth them that are called to the Ministery of the Church; to watch, and to haue their eies alwaies set vpon the flocke committed to their charge, that it be not corrupted either with ill manners, or with false doctrine. Bishop.

Secondly, they are called Ministers or seruants of Iesus Christ, that they may vnderstand, that they serue not men, but God, and therefore ought with the more diligence to Ministers.

apply themselues to the execution of their function.

Shepheards. Thirdly, they be called Pastours or Shepheards, to put them in remembrance that the flocke of Christ is continually to be fed with the word of God, & to be looked vnto, that the diuell, which is a rauening wolfe, enter not into it.

Elders. Finally, they be called Seniors, Elders, or Ancients, to declare the grauitie of manners, wherewith it is fit they should be beautified, so as they may be free from all lightnesse and vanity, which for the most part is vsuall in young yeeres.

Theoph. Therefore these sundry names, are not tokens of any degrees or dignitie.

Mat. Not at all: For Christ heretofore commanded this to his disciples striuing among themselues for the primacie or chiefety, that he which would be the chiefe among them, should be seruant to all. Which indeede was not spoken for their sakes alone, but is set forth as a rule to all Ministers of the Church.

Theoph. Thou hast now declared vnto me that first condition of the lawfull calling of Ministers: I pray thee goe on to the other.

Mat. Another is this, that men come not to it by any corruptions or gifts; but that it be free: so as they that haue the power to chuse, should haue onely the glory of God, and the edification of his Church, before their eies.

Thirdly, that he which is chosen haue a church appointed vnto him for the execution of his office, whose dutie it is to looke vnto it diligently and carefully.

Theoph. If it fall out that he which is chosen, do forsake his calling, is he to be accounted a Pastor or Minister?

Mat. No verily: vnlesse peraduenture he bee enforced thereto, for want of health. For otherwise hee is no more worthy the name of a Shepheard, than hee that hath vterly giuen ouer the keeping and care of the flocke.

Theoph. Is it lawfull for him that is called to the Ministery of the Church, to leaue off that calling to take another?

Mat. It is not lawfull: vnlesse it be vpon some very speciall, known, and approued occasion. For the Apostle witnesseth, that a necessitie lieth vpon him to preach the Gospell,

ſpell, who is once called to the miniſtery of the Church: Woe vnto him (ſaith he) if he preach not the Goſpell. 1. Cor. 9. 16.

Theoph. You haue verily reckoned vp worthy conditions; which whoſoeuer hath, is indeede to bee accounted a Paſtor or Shepheard of the flocke of Chriſt; namely

1. That he feele within him an inward calling,
2. Be of good conuerſation,
3. Of ſound doctrine,
4. Apt to teach,
5. Be lawfully choſen by the Church,
6. And finally, performe his office diligently toward the flocke committed to his charge. But yet you make no mention of perſonall ſucceſſion from the Apoſtles time; without which notwithſtanding, many thinke that the calling is voide and of none effect. Perſonall ſucceſſion.

Mat. I grant indeede, that, to make a man lawfully called to the miniſterie of the Church, Apoſtolical ſucceſſion is neceſſarie: which neuertheleſſe is to bee vnderſtood of the doctrine of the Apoſtles; not of their perſons. For euen as heretofore MATTHIAS was ſucceſſor to IVDAS; that is, a holy ſeruant of God to a traitor: ſo alſo it hath fallen out diuers times, that IVDAS hath ſucceeded MATTHIAS; that is, ſchiſmaticks and hereticks haue ſucceeded the moſt faithfull ſeruants of Chriſt. Moreouer there is no teſtimony in all the Scripture, by the which it can be proued, that that perſonall ſucceſſion is required as neceſſary to the calling of the Miniſters. This indeed is true, that, if there be both, the calling thereby hath the more authoritie: as it was in that which they call the Primitiue Church: for in it the perſonall ſucceſſion was ioyned with the truth of doctrine. But when the truth of doctrine is ouerthrowne, then perſonall ſucceſſion is nothing elſe but a viſard, which Sathan vſeth to blind-fold the eies of men, to the end he may keepe them in error. Therefore, when it commeth ſo to paſſe, as it is now in the Church of Rome, what madneſſe is it, to deſire that the election and calling of Miniſters, to preach the doctrine of Chriſt and his Apoſtles, ſhould hang vpon their perſon and will, that bewray themſelues to be his open enemies? and whoſe calling if it were examined by the former rule expreſſed in the word of God, ſhould

ſhould be found to be voide and nothing worth.

Theoph. I deſire you in few words to declare vnto mee thoſe points, wherein the truth of Chriſtian doctrine is ouerthrowen, in the Papacie.

A ſhort rehearſall of Popiſh impieties.

Mat. It ſtandeth chiefly in two heads or principal things. The firſt is, in that the ſincere and true worſhip of God is defiled with innumerable ſuperſtitions, yea with idolatry. The other is that which reſpecteth the benefite of Chriſt: which indeed is ouerthrowen, with the doctrine:

1. Of Free-will,
2. Of iuſtification by workes,
3. Of the merit of workes,
4. Of the interceſſion of Saints,
5. Of the Popes ſupremacy,
6. Of the workes of ſupererogation,
7. Of Pardons,
8. Of Purgatorie fire,

Out of which vngodly and wicked doctrines, the Maſſe was at length forged and patched vp, by the Church of ROME.

Theoph. The firſt fiue of theſe haue already beene declared by you: but the ſixt, namely of works of ſupererogation, I ſcarſe vnderſtand what it meaneth. I would therefore haue you ſhew it me briefly.

Works of ſupererogation.

Mat. To ſupererogate in Latine ſignifieth ſo much, as in the buſineſſe of another man to lay out a greater ſumme than we receiued of him, by meanes whereof hee is made debter vnto vs.

But theſe men dreame, that men may doe more good works than God hath commanded: and thoſe according to this ſimilitude, they call workes of ſupererogation, ſignifying that in reſpect of them they account God to bee in their debts; than which doctrine, what is more monſterlike? for any to beleeue, that a mortall man can binde his Creator vnto him: to whom notwithſtanding, whatſoeuer good thing he is able at any time to performe, that all he is indebted and bound to doe, according as hath bin ſhewed of vs in the chapter of workes. But what a miſchiefe it is, that a great part of theſe works of ſupererogation, is nothing elſe but idolatry or ſuperſtition? ſuch as be religi-

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ous pilgrimages, monasticall life, and such other of that kinde, wherewith God is euen offended. Wherefore seeing they haue set themselues against his will, the Lord is not onely nothing in their debt: but contrariwise they are so much the more holden guiltie before his iudgement seate.

Theoph. Verily, till now I knew not that opinion, as neither the other concerning pardons, which I desire thee to declare vnto me.

Mat. It is no lesse absurd than the other, forasmuch as it hangeth vpon it. And these doctrines do leane & stay themselues vpon two most impious and vngodly foundations. Popish pardons.

1. First, because they thinke that Christ by his death hath satisfied, not for the punishment, but for the fault onely of those sinnes which are commited of vs after Baptisme: and therefore that we our selues must satisfie for it, either in this life, or in Purgatorie fire, till it be fully paid.

2. Secondly, that one drop of Christs bloud was sufficient for our redemption. And that whatsoeuer he suffered besides, which is indeed an infinite merit, is laid vp in the treasurie of the Church, together with the innumerable works of supererogation wrought by hee-Saints and shee-Saints, for the which God is indebted vnto them. Of this treasure (say they) the Pope is the dispencer and steward, whereof he giueth to such as he seeth good, that is, to such as pay mony. That gift they call Indulgences or pardons, because they serue to remit or lessen somewhat of the punishment, to be otherwise suffered in Purgatory fire.

As often therfore as the Pope by his indulgences granteth ten, twenty, or an hundred yeeres of pardon, this hee meaneth, that somuch is diminished of the time of that punishment, which wee had deserued for full satisfaction to be suffered for our sinnes, either in this life, or in the life to come. Yea they say further (such is the height of their impietie) that these pardons, doe profit the dead, namely such as be in the fire of Purgatorie; insomuch, as that if the Pope would seriously and in earnest draw forth that his treasure of pardons, he could (say they) emptie it, and send the soules tormented in Purgatorie, directly into the heauens.

Theop.

should be found to be voide and nothing worth.

Theoph. I desire you in few words to declare vnto mee those points, wherein the truth of Christian doctrine is ouerthrowen, in the Papacie.

A short rehearsall of Popish impieties.

Mat. It standeth chiefly in two heads or principal things. The first is, in that the sincere and true worship of God is defiled with innumerable superstitions, yea with idolatry. The other is that which respecteth the benefite of Christ: which indeed is ouerthrowen, with the doctrine:

1. Of Free-will,
2. Of iustification by workes,
3. Of the merit of workes,
4. Of the intercession of Saints,
5. Of the Popes supremacy,
6. Of the workes of supererogation,
7. Of Pardons,
8. Of Purgatorie fire,

Out of which vngodly and wicked doctrines, the Masse was at length forged and patched vp, by the Church of ROME.

Theoph. The first fiue of these haue already beene declared by you: but the sixt, namely of works of supererogation, I scarse vnderstand what it meaneth. I would therefore haue you shew it me briefly.

Works of supererogation.

Mat. To supererogate in Latine signifieth so much, as in the businesse of another man to lay out a greater summe than we receiued of him, by meanes whereof hee is made debter vnto vs.

But these men dreame, that men may doe more good works than God hath commanded: and those according to this similitude, they call workes of supererogation, signifying that in respect of them they account God to bee in their debts; than which doctrine, what is more monsterlike? for any to beleeue, that a mortall man can binde his Creator vnto him: to whom notwithstanding, whatsoeuer good thing he is able at any time to performe, that all he is indebted and bound to doe, according as hath bin shewed of vs in the chapter of workes. But what a mischiefe it is, that a great part of these works of supererogation, is nothing else but idolatry or superstition? such as be religi-

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ous pilgrimages, monasticall life, and such other of that kinde, wherewith God is euen offended. Wherefore seeing they haue set themselues against his will, the Lord is not onely nothing in their debt: but contrariwise they are so much the more holden guiltie before his iudgement seate.

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As often therfore as the Pope by his indulgences granteth ten, twenty, or an hundred yeeres of pardon, this hee meaneth, that somuch is diminished of the time of that punishment, which wee had deserued for full satisfaction to be suffered for our sinnes, either in this life, or in the life to come. Yea they say further (such is the height of their impietie) that these pardons, doe profit the dead, namely such as be in the fire of Purgatorie; insomuch, as that if the Pope would seriously and in earnest draw forth that his treasure of pardons, he could (say they) emptie it, and send the soules tormented in Purgatorie, directly into the heauens.

Theop.

Theoph. Why therefore doth hee it not? according to the paterne of that pardon, the Vicar whereof hee saith that he is vpon the earth.

Mat. Lest that Purgatorie fire should bee altogether put out: by the which the Church of Rome hath gotten so great riches, wherewith it now aboundeth.

Theoph. I do verily see, that vpon good cause it was said of thee, that the truth of doctrine is vtterly ouerthrowen in the Church of Rome. For these two points, which thou hast euen now spoken of, doe almost altogether abolish and take away the grace of God, and benefit of Christ. Let vs now goe forward to the rest. Concerning the first part of this point, namely the lawfull calling of Ministers, I require no more. Let vs speake of the other, namely of the word of God which they are to preach. How many principall parts be there of it?

The Law. *Mat.* Two: the Law, and the Gospell.

Theoph. What vnderstandest thou, by the name of the Law?

Mat. That doctrine by which is taught what is to bee done to obey God; which indeed is contained in the ten commandements which we lately expounded.

Theo. But what is the Gospel?

The Gospel. *Mat.* The word of it selfe signifieth good tidings: but in this place it is taken for that doctrine, which containeth the promise of forgiuenesse of sinnes, and euerlasting life, which God hath made vnto vs in the word, by his Sonne. And it is called good tidings, because it is the most excellent message of all that can be brought.

Theoph. To what end must the Law be preached?

Mat. That men by the knowledge of their sinnes, may be brought to Christ, and to repentance and amendment of life. For therefore God gaue it, as we haue said in his place.

Theoph. Whereunto is the preaching of the Gospel to be referred?

Mat. Hereto, that the penitent may be assured of the forgiuenesse of sins, and the enioying of eternall life. For this cause Christ saith; that so he ought to haue suffered, &

Luk. 24 46. rise againe the third day; and that, in his name, repentance

tance and forgiueneſſe of ſinnes ſhould bee preached vnto all nations. But he ſaith expreſly, IN HIS NAME; becauſe both repentance, and the forgiueneſſe of ſinnes, haue their ground and foundation in the force of his death and reſurrection: without the which we can neither repent, nor obtaine forgiueneſſe of ſinnes; as it hath alſo beene ſaid in its owne place.

Theoph. What is the cauſe that Chriſt maketh mention of repentance, before the forgiueneſſe of ſinnes?

Mat. Not indeede to teach that repentance goeth before forgiueneſſe of ſinnes: for aſmuch as this rather goeth before that; for no man can repent, except (his ſins being pardoned) the Holy Ghoſt bee giuen him, by the helpe wherof he may repent. But to teach the Miniſters, that the doctrine of remiſſion of ſinnes, is not to be applied but to the penitent, ſeeing that faith (by the which we are made partakers of Chriſt and his benefits) maketh it ſelfe apparent and to bee ſeene by repentance; which alſo was ſhewed in the proper place.

Theoph. Seeing repentance is to be preached with remiſſion of ſinnes, it followeth, that the morall Law is not contrary to the Goſpell of grace. The agreement and diſagreement of the Law and Goſpell.

Mat. Neither is it indeede contrary, but in reſpect of them which ſeeke their ſaluation, either wholly or in part, by their good workes: for the Apoſtle ſaith; As many of you as be iuſtified by the Law, are made voide of Chriſt; and are fallen from grace. Gal. 5. 4.

But in reſpect of the faithfull, who know that their ſaluation dependeth vpon the onely mercie of God in Chriſt, there is a good agreement betweene the Law & the Goſpell. For the Law ſheweth vs ſinne, and the damnation that we haue pulled vpon our ſelues by it, and ſo, it leadeth vs to the Goſpell, by the which ſinne is put away, and wee diſcharged of condemnation.

Secondly, the Law ſheweth what is to be done; but the Goſpell, by the ſpirit of regeneration, miniſtreth vnto vs power both to will and to doe.

Theoph. Seeing there is ſo good a conſent betweene the Law and the Goſpell, wherefore doth PAVL ſay; You are not vnder the Law, but vnder grace? for it ſeemeth hee Rom. 6. 14.

would

would say thus much; that the Law is abolished and taken away by the Gospell of grace.

How the Law is taken away.

Mat. And indeede he vnderstandeth it of the abolishing of the Law by the Gospell, but concerning the condemnation and curse of it onely, as he himselfe in another place expoundeth, in these words; Christ hath redeemed vs from the curse of the Law; when he was made a curse for vs. Howbeit concerning the vse of it, it is no way abolished; for Christ himselfe saith; I came not to take away the Law, but to fulfill it. Which also the Apostle confirmeth in the Epistle to the Romanes. For, after that he had taught, that we are iustified not by the Law, but by faith in Iesus Christ, he presently addeth; Doe wee therefore make the Law voide through faith? God forbid; yea rather we establish the Law. And indeede, why should that most excellent benefit, which the Gospell yeeldeth vnto vs, discharge vs from the worship and seruing of God? by the which rather we are the more inuited and stirred vp to performe it towards him.

Gal. 3 13.

Math. 5. 17.

Rom. 3 31.

Theoph. Is the Law therefore neuer to be separated from the Gospell?

The Law neuer to be separated from the Gospell.

Mat. The one indeede is to bee distinguished from the other, that wee confound not the mercy of God with our works: which they do corruptly, that will mingle the righteousnesse of faith, with the righteousnes of the Law, that is to say, heauen with earth: neuertheless, they are not to be separated, neither yet to be preached apart.

Theoph. But Christ sending forth his Apostles to preach the Gospell throughout the whole world; maketh mention onely of the Gospell; for hee saith; Goe preach the Gospell to euery creature.

Mark. 16. 15.

Mat. The word Gospell, set by it selfe, comprehendeth also vnder it the doctrine of repentance, and therefore the Law, no lesse than the doctrine of remission of sinnes. Which indeede is plaine by the place of Luke alleadged euen now, who expoundeth those words of Marke; His words be these; Christ ought to suffer, and in his name repentance and forgiuenesse of sinnes to be preached. It is therefore the dutie of Ministers, in their Sermons, by the preaching of the Law, to bring men to the true knowledge

Luk. 24. 46.

A right manner of preaching.

ledge and feeling of their sinnes, and to ioyne therewith the threatnings denounced against the breakers of the Law, and to exhort them to true repentance and amendment of life. Then they ought to set before them the forgiuenesse of sinnes, from the doctrine of the Gospell of grace. But contrariwise, they ought to propound wrath and the iust iudgement of God against the disobedient and stubborne, except they conuert and repent. And these indeed be the keies of the Church, which Christ had promised to PETER, and in him to the other Apostles, and to Pastours: which also after his resurrection he deliuered to his Apostles, when hee sent them to preach the Gospell throughout the whole world. The keies of the Church.

Theoph. But why did he then promise those keies to PETER alone? which neuertheless, as thou saist, he meant to giue to the Apostles also?

Mat. Because then he spake to PETER only. But as a little before, PETER not onely in his owne name, but also in the name of all the rest of the Apostles, which had that one faith, had confessed that Iesus was the Christ, and the Son of the liuing God: in like manner, when Christ promised the keies to PETER, he meant that they were also promised to the rest of the Apostles, which he doth sufficiently declare in the deliuerie of them: for hee saith to all at once; Receiue the Holy Ghost: Whose sinnes you remit, they are remitted to them: whose sinnes you retaine, they bee retained. The same also did the other Apostles and all the Pastours confirme, when, exercising their ministerie, they vsed those keies.

Theoph. Wherefore doth Christ call the ministerie of Pastours, by the name of keies?

Mat. To the end we might vnderstand, that the Kingdome of heauen (as wee haue declared before) is by the ministerie of the Church set open to the beleeuers & penitent, and that it is shut against the vnbeleeuers and stubborne; namely, when as by it the former haue their sinnes forgiuen, that so they may come to eternall life: but to the other they be retained, that so they may bee shut from it. For God doth ratifie that in heauen, which the Ministers vpon earth pronounce out of his word, euen as it appeareth

reth by the words of Christ himselfe vnto PETER: for after promise of the keies, presently hee addeth; Whatsoeuer thou shalt binde in earth, shall bee bound in heauen: and whatsoeuer thou shalt loose in earth, shall be loosed in heauen. And the selfe same thing hee repeated after to all the Apostles, to shew that they had like authoritie of binding and loosing giuen to them with PETER.

Math. 16. 19.

What it is to bind & loose.

Theoph. Therefore to binde and loose, is nothing else but to declare the remission of sinnes, or to retaine them.

Mat. Indeed nothing, as it is plaine by the interpretation of Christ himselfe; for he said to his Apostles in the place which euen now we recited, Receiue the holy Ghost: whose sinnes ye remit, they be remitted vnto them; whose sinnes you shall retaine, they shall be retained. For there is no harder band than sin, forasmuch as being bound with it, we be held, and indeed willingly, vnder the power and tyranny of the diuell and death, and it cannot be loosed by any strength of man, but by the onely might of Christ.

Theoph. Why then doth Christ commit the office of binding and loosing to the Minister? seeing he himselfe alone hath the power of binding and loosing.

Mat. It is, that we may vnderstand, that the Ministers be as it were Ambassadors and Proclaimers of the will of God; which PAVL teacheth in these words: God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himselfe, not imputing to them their sinnes: and hath put in vs this word of reconciliation. Therefore wee are Ambassadors in the name of Christ; as though God by vs did exhort you, wee intreate you in Christs stead to be reconciled to God.

2. Cor. 5. 19.

Theoph. I see not therefore, that the Ministers haue more power of binding and loosing granted them, than any other priuate man; for there is none that may not assure the beleeuer and penitent of the forgiueneſſe of his sinnes; and contrariwise, which may not set the iudgement of God before the vnbeleeuer and obstinate, except hee repent. And that verily shal be confirmed in heauen, as it was pronounced by that priuate person: for that is the will of God reuealed in his Word.

Of the authoritie of the Ministers of the Church.

Mat. That is right indeede; but there is some speciall thing to be considered in the promise of Christ made to the

the Miniſters: namely, that by his Spirit he wil giue more efficacy and force to their words than to the words of any priuate man; ſo as they ſhall by faith be receiued of the beleeuer, and ſhall terrifie the conſcience of the vnbeleeuer, and ſet before his eies the wrath and iudgement of God. For otherwiſe the name of the keies of the kingdome of heauen ſhould falſly bee giuen vnto the miniſterie of the Church: ſeeing, that to bring vs to enter into it, it is not enough that the doctrine of forgiueneſſe of ſinnes beate our eares, but eſpecially that it enter into our hearts, and be receiued of vs in faith and obedience: whereunto is referred that ſaying of PAVL; Neither my ſpeech, nor my preaching ſtood in the entiſing words of mans wiſedome, but in the demonſtration or euidence of ſpirituall power. For this cauſe alſo ISAIAH calleth the preaching of the word the arme of the Lord, that is, the inſtrument, by the which hee declareth his might and power, that hee may bring vs to ſaluation.

1. Cor. 2. 4.

Iſay 5. 3.

Theoph. I ſee indeed, that the force and fruit of preaching the Word of God is very great. For thoſe three ſteps by the which we obtaine ſpirituall health, whereof thou didſt intreat in the Chapter of Faith, are by it daily called to vſe and practiſe.

The efficacie and fruit of the Word preached.

Mat. Thou iudgeſt right. For firſt, the Law is preached, that we may acknowledge our deadly diſeaſe, namely, ſin.

Secondly, the Goſpell is preached, wherein the ſauing remedy is offered vnto vs in Chriſt.

Laſt of all, Faith which is wrought in vs, and increaſed by the preaching of the Word, applieth that medicine vnto vs; ſo as we obtaine ſaluation, euen the full forgiueneſſe of all our ſinnes.

Theoph. The article of remiſſion of ſinnes in the Creede, vnleſſe I bee deceiued, is therefore ſet after the article of the Church, to the end wee might know, that it is offered vnto vs by the miniſtery of it.

Mat. It is indeede: and therefore there is no forgiueneſſe of ſinnes, neither ſaluation without the Church; as in the floud there was no ſafety out of the Arke of NOAH, wherin alſo at that time the Church of God was then ſhut vp; that being as it were a type of it.

Theoph.

Theoph. You haue hitherto largely enough taught, that by the ministery of the word we do truly obtaine forgiuenesse of out sinnes. Notwithstanding, there be two things behinde, whereof I will aske you, before we come to the other Treatises:

1. First, whether God doe wholly (as they say) forgiue to the repentant all their sinnes?

2. Secondly, whether hee forgiue them perfectly; namely, remitteth the punishment and the fault, so as they be not any more imputed vnto vs?

1. Ioh. 1. 7. All sinnes be forgiuen to the penitent.

Mat. Let vs speake of the former, in the first place. IOHN saith, that the bloud of Christ doth wash vs from all sinne. He that saith, ALL, excepteth nothing. Now, repentance yeeldeth vnto vs a more certaine testimonie of our faith: by the which, as hath beene said, wee bee made partakers of Christ, and of his gifts. Whereupon it followeth, that whosoeuer repenteth, may most certainly determine, that all his sinnes (albeit they bee greeuous) are forgiuen and done away. Which also is taught, by the example of that sinfull woman, and of the theefe.

Math. 12. 32.

Theoph. But Christ saith, that the sinne against the Holy Ghost shall neuer be forgiuen.

Of the sinne against the Holy Ghost. Heb. 6. 4.

Mat. Hee saith so indeede: And the Apostle to the Hebrewes sheweth, that it is impossible that such as fall into it should bee renewed by repentance. For that is the gift of God, granted to them onely, of whom he hath determined in Christ to haue mercie.

Theoph. But what is that sinne against the Holy Ghost?

Mat. These words, Against the Holy Ghost, doe sufficiently declare what it is: namely, when any, after that hee hath by the Holy Ghost been enlightened with the knowledge of the truth of the Gospell, standeth against that truth, not for feare, or through infirmitie, but vpon wilfull malice. For then wittingly and willingly hee resisteth the Holy Ghost, and maketh warre against him.

Theoph. How knowest thou that this is the sinne against the Holy Ghost?

Mat. First, it may be gathered of that, which gaue our Sauiour Christ occasion to speake of it: namely, that hee might proue the Scribes and Pharisies to be guiltie of that horrible

horrible ſinne, who ſaid, that the miracles which hee did, were wrought by the diuell, whereof notwithſtanding, they were not ignorant that God was the Authour, and Chriſt himſelfe by moſt certaine arguments did declare. And his miracles they did malicioufly diſpraiſe in the hatred of his doctrine, which they perceiued was manifeſtly confirmed by them. From hence therefore it is plaine, that they ſinne againſt the Holy Ghoſt, who vpon ſet malice ſtand againſt the knowne truth. Adde hereunto, that by ſundry places of the Scripture it appeareth, that euery other ſinne is forgiuen: not excepting that which is againſt the doctrine of faith, ſo as it be done either of ignorance, (as it was with *Paul* when he perſecuted the Church) or through infirmitie and weakneſſe, as when *Peter* denied Chriſt.

Theoph. It is verily a wonder, that ſo horrible wickednes can enter into the minds of men, as vpon purpoſed malice to ſtriue againſt the knowne truth.

Mat. It commeth to paſſe by the iuſt iudgement of God vnto thoſe that haue long and much deſpiſed and ſet light by his moſt precious gifts; namely, his louing kindnes and mercy in Chriſt (the knowledge whereof, notwithſtanding he had vouchſafed them): and at length they be deliuered to the power of the diuell, that by ſteps and degrees they may fall to that extreme and finall Apoſtaſie. And becauſe they are by it become like vnto Satan (namely, in that, vpon knowledge and wilful malice, they reſiſt the truth) they, no otherwiſe then he himſelfe, be depriued of all hope of ſaluation.

Theoph. Let vs now come to the other queſtion. When God forgiueth ſins, whether doth he it perfectly, ſo as hee remitteth the puniſhment and the fault?

Mat. As God is perfect, ſo doth hee perfectly forgiue ſinnes; ſo as hee neuer remembreth them, nor imputeth them vnto vs: for ſo he ſaith euery where by his Prophets; If your ſinnes were as crimſon, they ſhall bee made whiter then ſnow: if they were as red as ſcarlet, they ſhall bee as wooll. I haue put away thy tranſgreſſions, as thicke clouds; and thy ſins, as a miſt. He will lay aſide our iniquities, and caſt all our ſinnes into the bottome of the ſea. As farre as the Eaſt is diſtant from the Weſt, ſo farre doth he remoue our

Whether God remitteth the puniſhment and the fault.
Eſay 1.18.
Eſay 44.22.
Mich. 7 19.
Pſal. 103.12.

our sins from vs. Neither is this any maruell. For, seeing the forgiuenesse of our sinnes is grounded vpon Christ, in whom they be fully punished, God should be vniust, if he required any thing further for them.

An obiection against the doctrine of remitting the punishment and fault.

Theoph. But wee reade, that *Dauid* suffered many punishments, after that (by the message of *Nathan*) he was certified of the forgiuenesse of his adulterie. For the childe that was borne vnto him of *Bathsheba* died. Moreouer also, his sonne *Absolon* was raised vp against him, who both made warre vpon him, and defiled his wiues: which punishment was indeed denounced against him by the Prophet. Wherupon it seemeth to follow, that God forgiueth the sinne, but retaineth the punishment.

The answer to the obiection.

Mat. This is the doctrine of the Romanists, from whence came the dreame of Pardons and Purgatorie fire, as hath before beene declared of vs. Neuertheless, I am glad it is so come to passe, that we may fitly speake of it in this place. For I will shew that it is most absurd, inasmuch as it separateth those things, which of their owne nature do wholly hang together. For if thou take away the fault, there is no place left for punishment: otherwise God should be vniust, if he should punish whom he accounteth not faulty. Moreouer, seeing Christ himselfe in his owne body suffered the punishments due to our sinnes, it is not to be doubted, but that he hath discharged vs from the same: euen as *Esay* expresly affirmeth, in these words: Verily, he hath borne our griefes, and hath carried our sorrowes: and we thought him stricken, wounded of God, and humbled; but he was wounded for our iniquities, and broken for our sinnes. The chastisement of our peace was vpon him, and by his stripes we are healed. All we as sheepe haue gone astray, euery one hath turned to his owne way, and the Lord hath laide vpon him the iniquities of vs all. For this cause also *Paul* saith; That there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Iesus. Whereby it plainely appeareth, that God (when through Christ he forgiueth sinnes) doth no lesse remit the punishment of them, then the fault. For otherwise our case should be most miserable) yea rather we are already cast-awaies) and the forgiuenesse of our sinnes auaileth vs nothing, if the punishment be retained.

Isa. 53 4.

Rom 8 1.

Theoph.

Theoph. Why ſo?

Mat. Becauſe we be vnable to beare the burthen of it; foraſmuch as it is infinite no leſſe then the fault: for they be of the ſame nature.

Theoph. What thinke you of the afflictions which God ſendeth vnto vs, euen after the forgiueneſſe of ſinnes?

Mat. I ſay they be not ſent to be puniſhments of ſinnes: but to bee vnto vs in ſtead of chaſtiſements and corrections to humble vs, and that we may be the wiſer after: for the Apoſtle ſaith: When wee are chaſtiſed, wee are inſtructed of the Lord, that wee ſhould not be condemned with the world. 1 Cor. 11. 32.

Theoph. Therefore the nature of afflictions bee changed when they be ſent to the godly: for they bee not puniſhments of ſinnes, to ſatiſfie the iudgement of God.

Mat. You ſay well: and the ſame is to be thought of the infirmities of the body: which we know he left vs, not to bee puniſhments of ſinnes, but in exerciſing of patience. The ſame alſo is to bee ſaid of death, which to vs is as a bridge, by the which wee paſſe ouer vnto euerlaſting life, and a way is made for the reſurrection; which neuertheleſſe, of it owne nature, is a puniſhment of ſinne, and putteth vs in minde of it. But it is not ſent to the faithfull to call them to account for their ſins, as it commeth to paſſe to the wicked.

Theoph. By the ſolution and anſwer of theſe queſtions, mee thinkes I vnderſtand this, that by the miniſtery of the Church, all ſinnes of what kinde ſoeuer be forgiuen to the penitent. Moreouer, that there is no other ſatiſfaction for them required of God, beſides the moſt precious blood of Ieſus Chriſt; by the which, both the fault and puniſhment of them is wholy taken away: which doctrine doth indeed bring the greateſt conſolation. Howbeit, before I make an end of this ſpeech, I will aske you, whether Gods indulgence (or readineſſe to forgiue) doe miniſter vnto men occaſion to flatter themſelues in their ſinnes, and to continue in them? Whether the declaration of Gods mercie giue men occaſion to continue in their ſinnes.

Mat. Nay rather cleane contrariwiſe. For the hope and aſſurance of obtaining pardon, doth ſtir vp the godly, that they doe not cloake or maintaine themſelues in their ſins.

Whereunto that ſaying of the Prophet is to bee referred; Pſalm.130.4. With thee there is mercy, that thou maieſt be feared. For, from whence is obedience, but from loue? And againe, whence is loue, but from the knowledge and aſſurance of Gods goodneſſe towards vs? Moreouer, this doctrine of the forgiueneſſe of ſinnes, pertaineth not to any, ſaue to the penitent. But concerning the reſt, the Scripture denoun- Ezech.3.20. ceth to them the wrath and iudgement of God. Yea rather the Lord ſaith by the Prophet, that euen as hee will forget the ſinnes of him that repenteth, ſo he will not remember the righteouſneſſe of him that ſhall turne from the right way. Whereupon it is plaine, that this doctrine doth not onely bring very great comfort to the faithfull, but alſo doth continually ſpur them forward, to apply themſelues to amendment of life.

CHAP. II.

Of the Sacraments, ordained of God to bee as it were ſeales of the Word; that we may with more aſſurance embrace the promiſe by Chriſt, reuealed in the Word.

THEOPHILVS.

What Sacraments be. HItherto we haue ſufficiently ſpoken of the Miniſtery of the Word. Now we are come to the Sacraments: And firſt declare vnto me what Sacraments be.

Mat. They be ſignes and Sacramentall rites, ordained of God in the Church, to bee adioyned to the preaching of the Word, that the promiſe of Chriſt made in it, may be confirmed in vs more and more.

Theoph. Why are thoſe ſignes and ſacramentall rites called Sacraments?

Mat. The ancient Teachers of the Chriſtian Church, called them by this name, in reſpect of the affinity or neerneſſe betweene them and a Sacrament, that is to ſay, that ſolemne oath, by the which, ſouldiers bound themſelues to the Emperour or chiefe Captaine.

Theoph. Shew me the affinitie or agreement.

Mat. Firſt, as ſouldiers when they receiued their pay, bound themſelues to the Emperour by ſolemne oath, to liue and die vnder his gouernment: ſo wee when wee are partakers of the ſignes, which God hath appointed in his Church,

Church, by the which he beſtoweth vpon vs ſpirituall gifts, doe binde our ſelues to him by the ſame oath. Moreouer, as ſouldiers when they tooke vpon them this oath, receiued the Emperours badge; that it might appeare, they had giuen themſelues to him, and were become his: ſo alſo wee, when we are publikely partakers of the Sacraments which God hath inſtituted in his Church, doe take vpon vs as it were, the enſigne or armes of Chriſt, that it may be known we ſerue God, and profeſſe true religion.

Theoph. I vnderſtand the reaſon of the Word. Now let vs come to the thing it ſelfe. The Sacraments, thou ſaidſt, were ordained of God, for confirmation of the promiſe made by God, through Chriſt, in his word. What is that promiſe?

Mat. It is expounded of Chriſt himſelfe, in theſe words, So God loued the world, that he gaue his onely begotten Sonne, that whoſoeuer beleeueth in him, ſhould not periſh, but haue life euerlaſting. Iohn 3.16.

The Sacraments therefore bee as it were viſible pledges of the loue of God towards vs, by the which wee are confirmed in it. But, becauſe that loue is grounded in Chriſt alone, the Sacraments repreſent vnto vs no other thing then the vnion and fellowſhip that we haue with him and his gifts.

Theoph. Of whom ought the Sacraments to bee adminiſtred?

Mat. Chriſt committed that office to them alone, to whom the preaching of the Word is committed; without the which neither ought the Sacraments to bee adminiſtred: for they be as ſeales thereof. Of whom the Sacraments ought to be adminiſtred.

Theoph. There is therefore a very great likeneſſe and agreement betweene the Word and the Sacraments.

Mat. Very great. For by both of them God doth offer vnto vs Ieſus Chriſt his Sonne, with all his gifts: and we are made partakers of them, if they be not refuſed of vs by vnbeleefe. This onely is the difference, that the preaching of the Word affecteth the hearing; but the Sacraments affect the other ſenſes. Whereupon, of a certaine Father, they be moſt fitly called, Viſible words. For, they doe preſent Chriſt and his benefits, as it were, before our eies

cies, and deliuer them into our hands: that, by those sundrie meanes, our faith might be confirmed, and we come so much the neerer to him, and feele the greater working of his Spirit within vs.

What conditions be required in Sacraments.

Theoph. What conditions bee required in the Sacraments?

Mat. Three: without which, they cannot be truly sacraments, but false.

Theoph. What are those conditions?

Mat. First, that they be ordained of God.

Secondly, that there bee a commandement of God, whereby we may vse them.

Thirdly, that there bee also a certaine promise; by the which it be assured, that we shall be partakers of the things that are represented by them.

Theoph. Why say you, it is necessary that they be ordained of God?

Why the first condition.

Mat. Because, as there is none besides himselfe, which can assure vs of the loue he beareth towards vs in Christ: so is there not any man that may ordaine visible signes to confirme it. Moreouer, in the institution it selfe, there bee three things to be noted:

1. The signes and sacramentall rites.

2. The spirituall and inuisible things, signified by those signes.

3. The analogie or agreement of the signes, with the things signified.

Theoph. I acknowledge it to be necessarie, that sacraments be ordained of God; but, I desire to vnderstand, why this also is necessarie, that there should be a commandement of God, to the intent we may vse them?

Why the second condition.

Mat. Because nothing is to bee done in the Church of God, except there bee first the expresse commandement of God (who in it is Lord and Master): especially when the question is of things that concerne our saluation; such as the sacraments be.

Theoph. Why is it againe required, that there be a promise annexed?

VVhy the third condition.

Mat. Because vnlesse there be a promise, the sacraments shall be vnprofitable vnto vs. Now, that promise which on the

the behalfe of God hath the effect, is as it were the ſoule of the Sacraments, whereupon all their force and efficacy dependeth; and not vpon the holyneſſe or worthineſſe of him of whom they be miniſtred, or vpon the vertue of ſome words pronounced. Therefore, without that promiſe, the Sacraments ſhall bee nothing elſe but vaine and fruitleſſe ceremonies.

Theoph. Thinkeſt thou that the ſacraments, if they bee miniſtred of ſome wicked man and hypocrite, haue as much efficacie and force, as if they were miniſtred by ſome good man;

Mat. I thinke it: ſo, as on our part, we bring nothing to hinder it. As good ſeed, if it finde good ground, will beare fruit, notwithſtanding it bee ſowen of ſome naughtie and wicked man. For the vertue of it hangeth not vpon the ſower (as neither doe the ſacraments vpon the Miniſter) but vpon the bleſſing and grace of God only.

Vpon whom dependeth the efficacy of the Sacraments.

Theoph. Let vs come to the number of the ſacraments: How many be there in the Chriſtian Church?

The number of the Sacraments

Mat. Two: namely, Baptiſme and the Lords Supper.

Theoph. Seeing they declare vnto vs one thing, as alſo the Word doth (namely, the loue of God towards vs in Chriſt) what is the cauſe that they be two in number?

Mat. Becauſe, by Baptiſme, God doth witneſſe, that we bee receiued of him into his couenant, through the communication of Chriſt and his gifts: but by the Supper he auoucheth, that we are retained and kept in it, till we be receiued into the heauenly life. And for this cauſe Baptiſme is onely once miniſtred, but the Supper often times.

Theoph. Declare this reaſon to me more at large.

Mat. Yet, to me it ſeemeth eaſie. For, ſeeing Baptiſme is the aſſured conueiance vnto vs of the couenant made with vs in Chriſt, if it ſhould be iterated or vſed the ſecond time, or oftner, it were all one as if we ſaid, that God had abrogated or diſanulled the former couenant, to ordaine or appoint another: which indeed is altogether contrary to the very nature, truth, and conſtancie of God. For the Apoſtle ſaith: With him there is no changing, or ſhadow of alteration. But, concerning the Supper, it is altogether required, both for edifying and for comfort, that

Iames 1.17.

it bee oft repeated and vſed of vs: ſeeing that (ſuch is the weakneſſe of our faith) we doe euery moment call into doubt whether God will continue in his loue towards vs, or no; eſpecially, when we looke into our many ſinnes, for the which wee are indeed worthy to bee excluded by him. But, God would aſſure vs of his loue, by this Sacrament: in the which hee doth both offer and exhibite (or giue) Ieſus Chriſt vnto vs, with his treaſures; in whom alone, as hath beene ſaid, that couenant and loue hath the foundation.

Whether the Sacraments be neceſſary to ſaluation

Theoph. I will yet demand of thee one queſtion generally pertaining to the Sacraments, before wee begin the particular expoſition of them both, Whether are they ſo neceſſarie to ſaluation, that no man can be ſaued without partaking of them?

Mat. It is a moſt abſurd opinion of thoſe, who thinke that God hath tied his grace to the Sacraments: for they be onely for this end ordained, that the grace and fauour, yeelded vs before in Chriſt, ſhould bee confirmed and ratified. Therefore it was moſt excellently ſaid of an ancient Father; That the want of baptiſme did not condemne but the contempt of it.

Bernard. ep. 77.

Mar. 16. 16.

Theoph. But Chriſt ſaith; Whoſoeuer beleeueth and is baptized, ſhall be ſaued. Out of which words it ſeemeth may be gathered, that Chriſt determineth Baptiſme to bee neceſſary to ſaluation, no leſſe than faith. It ſeemeth alſo, that the ſame may be gathered concerning the ſupper, out of that which Chriſt himſelfe ſaid in another place; Verily verily, I ſay vnto you, except ye eate the fleſh of the Sonne of man, and drinke his blood, ye haue no life in you.

Iohn 6. 53.

Mat. In the firſt place, I will anſwer to thoſe things which thou ſaiedſt of Baptiſme And I affirme, that in that place Chriſt doth not ſet down the neceſſity of baptiſme; but rather ſheweth what that true faith is, by the which we are ſaued; namely, that it is not dead and hidden, but liuely, and declared by outward confeſſion, ſo that the beleeuers doe ioine themſelues to the Church, and be partakers of the preaching of the word & adminiſtration of the Sacraments: whereunto that ſaying of *Paul* ought to bee referred; Wee beleeue with the heart, to righteouſnes; and confeſſe with the mouth, to ſaluation. And, that this is the

Rom. 10. 10.

minde

minde of Christ, it is gathered by the member following: for he saith; But whosoeuer beleeueth not, shall bee condemned. For if this had beene his meaning, that no man could haue beene saued without Baptisme, he would haue said thus; But whosoeuer shall not beleeue, or shall not be baptized, shall be condemned. Seeing therefore he saith, that vnbeleefe is the cause of condemnation, by the contrary he meaneth, that faith is sufficient to saluation; which he himselfe often times confirmeth when he saith; He that beleeueth in the Sonne, hath life euerlasting; but he that beleeueth not in the Sonne, shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him. Concerning the other place, of eating the flesh of Christ and drinking his blood, hee doth not here entreat particularly of the supper; but generally of the vnion that we ought to haue with his bodie; which indeed is altogether necessarie to saluation, as hath beene fully proued by vs in the first Booke. But that vnion is no lesse wrought by the word apprehended in faith, than it is by the Sacraments: as hath beene said already.

Iohn 3.63. & 5.24. & 6.4.

CHAP. III.

Of Baptisme: by the which God testifieth that wee are receiued of him vnto couenant; in that hee doth communicate Christ Iesus vnto vs together with his benefits.

THEOPHILVS.

NOw we are to weigh those two Sacraments each by it selfe; and in both, those three conditions are to be searched out, that are required to make them truly Sacraments. Let vs therefore begin with baptisme. What is the institution of it?

Mat. First indeede, it was instituted of God by the ministerie of *Iohn Baptist*, who thereupon had his name. Afterward it was dedicated and sanctified of Christ in his owne body, when hee would be baptized of him, and when hee commanded the Apostles to baptize.

The institution of Baptisme.

Theo. Let vs see those three things which thou saiedst were required in the lawfull institution of a Sacrament; namely:

1. The signe and Sacramentall rites.
2. The signification of them.

3. The

The signe.

3. The likenesse and agreement betweene both.

Mat. The signe of this Sacrament is water, which signifieth the blood of Christ; that is, the force of his death: because it hath that effectuall working, in cleansing our soules from the filthinesse of sinne, which materiall water hath in cleansing our bodies. Thereupon this Sacrament hath the name of Baptisme: for it signifieth a rinsing or washing away. Now thou hast the signe.

The Sacramentall rite.

But the Sacramentall rite is; that he which is to be baptized, be sprinkled with water, or dipped in it: which was vsed in former times; and by it two things was signified vnto vs:

1. First, that our soules are sprinkled with the blood of Christ, that is, be indeed partakers of the merit of his death: by the which we obtaine full forgiuenesse of all our sinnes.

Tit. 3.5.

2. Secondly, that we be regenerated into a new life. Therefore Baptisme is of *Paul* called the Bath of regeneration. By which words, those two gifts of God that wee obtaine in baptisme, are excellently noted.

Theoph. How can the sprinkling of water be a signe or token of our regeneration?

Mat. The Scripture is wont to set downe two parts of it: namely, the mortification or death of the old man, and the rising againe of the new man, as it hath been said of vs in his place. But this mortification, which hath the force and working from the death and buriall of Christ, is most fitly represented by the sprinkling of water. For it is all one as if our olde man being wounded to the death, or euen swallowed vp of death it selfe, were buried with Christ. Then withall followeth the resurrection of the new man, which hangeth vpon the resurrection of Christ; and is represented by the water making cleane: for by it is signified, that together with him we doe rise from the graue of death to become new creatures.

Theoph. There bee yet behinde the promise and commandement of this Sacrament.

Mat. 28.19. The commandement and promise.

Mat. The words of Christ, set downe by *Mathew*, doe contain both: Go teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Sonne, and the Holy Ghost.

Theoph.

Theoph. The commandement I see, but not the promise.

Mat. It is contained vnder the commandement. For, when any is baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, it is as if it were said vnto him; By this visible signe I do assure thee, that all thy sinnes are washed away, and thy selfe regenerated, not by any vertue or force that is in me, or in this water wherewith thou art sprinkled; but by the mercy of the heauenly Father, who, for this purpose doth, by the power of the holy Ghost, communicate vnto thee Christ Iesus his Sonne, with all his benefits, and vniteth thee vnto him, so as thou art made partaker of him. Seeing therefore Christ commandeth, that these things should be preached, it is not to be doubted, but that he promiseth the thing it selfe. Baptisme therefore is giuen vs of God, as it were writings sealed; by the which he assureth vs of the full forgiuenesse of all our sinnes.

The words in Baptisme expounded.

Theoph. What sinnes thinkest thou be done away by Baptisme? onely originall sinne?

Mat. That indeede is first done away; not that it doth not remaine in vs: but because it is not imputed. The same also we may affirme of other sinnes; which be effects of it. For they bee put away by this sacrament: they bee put away (I say) both they that bee past, and those that are to come. The words therefore deliuered of the Minister in Baptisme, by the commandement of God (namely, I baptize thee in the name of the Father, Son and holy Ghost) should alwaies be in our eares, euen vntil the last gaspe: and by them ought wee to be assured of the full forgiuenesse of our sinnes. For the blood of Christ, in the which wee are once baptized, is neuer drawne cleane out; but is alwaies fresh, as the Apostle speaketh, that is, full of efficacie and strength, to the continuall washing away of all our filthinesse and iniquities.

VVhat sinnes be put away in Baptisme.

Heb. 10.10.16. 12.14 & 9. 13.14.

Theoph. Thou saidst in the exposition of this promise, that in this sacrament, the Father did communicate Christ and his benefits vnto vs. But both the signe of it, and the sacramentall rites, doe only represent vnto vs the participation, or fellowship which we haue with his death; but not the communion we haue with his body.

Of our vnion with Christ.

Mat. We haue taught in the first booke, that no man

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can be partakers of Christs benefits, which is not made one with him. The one therefore followeth vpon the other. By these things therefore it is prooued, that by Baptisme we be truly made partakers both of Christs body, and of his benefits; which also *Paul* confirmeth in these words;

Gal.3.27. So many of you as be baptized into Christ, haue put on Christ.

Theoph. I come againe to the institution of Baptisme,

Mat.28 19. wherein Christ saith to his Apostles; Goe, teach all Nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Sonne, and holy Ghost. What is the cause that Christ commandeth his Apostles to teach first, before they baptize?

Why Christ would haue the VVord preached, before Baptisme be administred.

Mat. The reason is most euident. For, seeing the Sacraments be as Seales of the Word, it is fit that euery one should be first instructed in the doctrine, before he be baptized or confirmed in the same doctrine; excepting onely the children of the faithfull, of whom there is another reason, which causeth that they are to bee baptized presently after they be borne.

Baptizing of children.

Theoph. What is that reason?

Exod.20. *Mat.* Because God hath promised, in the person of *Abraham*, that he will be the God of the faithfull, and of their seede. Which selfesame thing God confirmeth in the Law, when he saith; That he is such a one as sheweth mercy to a thousand generations of those that loue him, and keepe his commandements. Seeing therefore the children of beleeuers appertaine to the couenant of God, it is not to be doubted, but that the Sacrament of it, namely Baptisme, is to be ministred to them. Which is againe confirmed by the example of the Israelites, who by the commandement of God circumcised their children the eight day.

Theoph. Is there the same reason of Baptisme, and of Circumcision?

The agreement betweene Circumcision & Baptisme. *Mar.* Yea, altogether; and in very deed it is one and the selfe same Sacrament, as concerning the substance. For, after the comming of Christ, Baptisme came in place of Circumcision; and by it the gifts of God were not diminished, but increased vnto vs. For, as the Sacraments of the new Testament haue a farre more easie and plaine signification then the Sacraments of the old Testament;

ſtament; ſo the force and efficacie of them is farre greater.

Theoph. But what profit can there come by Baptiſme to a childe without vnderſtanding and knowledge? What profit commeth by baptizing of children.

Mar. Much, if thou conſider both the glorie of God, the comfort of the parents, and finally, the edification and ſaluation of the childe.

Theoph. Why ſo?

Mar. Firſt of all, God is glorified, for that hee ſheweth himſelfe true in his promiſes, by the which it is, that hee hath mercy vpon the faithfull, euen to the thouſandth generation. Moreouer, the parent himſelfe is wonderfully comforted, and confirmed in the loue of God; when hee ſeeth, that not onely he himſelfe is beloued of God; but alſo that the loue and grace of God is deriued vnto his children: which God aſſureth him of, by that viſible ſigne. Finally, concerning the childe, it hath a maruellous benefite beſtowed vpon it, in that he doth ſo ſoone obtaine the partaking of Chriſt and his benefits; by the which he hath the inheritance of eternall life. By the remembrance whereof, when hee commeth to age, hee is wonderfully confirmed in the loue and feare of God; namely, when he calleth to minde, that he is ſo much eſteemed of God, that euen from his comming into this world, he obtained fellowſhip in his couenant.

Theoph. But how can a young childe by Baptiſme be partaker of Chriſt and his benefits? ſeeing it is certaine that he lacketh faith: without which, thou affirmedſt before, that no man can haue that fellowſhip.

Mat. That indeed is true in thoſe that be of yeeres, and in ſuch as for their age may beleeue. But God worketh in the children of the faithfull, belonging to his couenant, another way vnknowne to vs. Whom alſo the Apoſtle doubteth not to call holy, inſomuch as they cannot periſh, ſeeing they haue in them a ſprigge of faith: which doubtleſſe, when time ſhall come, bringeth foorth the fruits, in ſome ſooner, and in others later; as it ſhall ſeeme good to the Lord to call them. How the children of beleeuers lacking faith be partakers of Chriſt. 1. Cor. 7. 14.

Theoph. I doe now ſee, that the children of the godly are to bee baptized. Norwithſtanding, I will propound one queſtion more, before I goe from the ſpeech which I haue begun,

How the children of the godly bee borne in originall sinne. Aug. de pecca. meri. & remis. li. 3. cap. 18.

begun. How can it bee, that those children of the godly should be borne defiled with originall sinne? seeing their parents are purged of it.

Mat. Augustine, by an excellent similitude, answereth this question, in these words; Like as chaffe, by the labour and great diligence of man, being seuered from the wheat, abideth notwithstanding in the fruit which groweth of that wheate thus cleansed: so sinne, whereof by Baptisme the parents are cleansed, abideth in those whom they haue begotten. Therefore our children, except they bee borne againe by a spirituall birth, cannot be accounted the children of God, nor heires of eternall life.

CHAP. IIII.

Of the Supper of the Lord; by the which God testifieth, that his Couenant is enlarged in vs, forasmuch as he maketh vs more and more partakers of Christ and his benefits.

THEOPHILVS.

HItherto hath beene spoken of Baptisme: let vs now come to the Supper of the Lord, and let vs begin at the institution of it.

Mat. The Euangelists shew, that it was instituted of Christ, the same night he was betraied, after that hee had supped, & had eatē the Paschall lamb according to the law.

Theo, I thinke it was thereupon called Supper.

Of the word Supper, and the institution of it.

Mat. It is called Supper, of the Apostle, not so much for this cause, as to shew that it is indeede a spirituall Supper made by God vnto the faithfull; wherein he feedeth them with the body and blood of Iesus Christ into the hope of eternall life.

Theoph. The three heads of the institution are to be examined of vs: namely,

1. The signes and sacramentall rites,
2. Their signification,
3. And finally, the likenesse or agreement betweene both.

The signes of the Supper.

Mat. The signes are bread and wine: which indeede do signifie the body and blood of Christ. Because the body and blood of Christ haue that force and efficacie in the feeding of our soules, which bread and wine haue in nourishing,

riſhing our bodies. And, for this cauſe, Chriſt alſo calleth himſelfe the bread of life. Ioh. 6. 48.

Theoph. What difference makeſt thou betweene the bread and wine of the Supper, and the bread and wine which wee vſe for our ordinarie meate and drinke?

Mat. Truly none in the ſubſtance; but in the vſe and miniſtring of the Supper: concerning which, this I hold, that the one are ſet before vs for the nouriſhment of the body: but the other be ordained of God to bee ſignes of the body and blood of Chriſt. The ſame alſo is to bee thought of the water of Baptiſme.

Theoph. Why be there two ſignes in the Supper?

Mat. To the end we might know, that in Chriſt we haue whole and perfect ſpirituall food; that is, whatſoeuer is requiſit to our ſaluation. It was alſo done for a more perfect remembrance of his death. For the wine, which is the ſigne of his blood, doth as it were repreſent it before our eies. Why there is a double ſigne in the Supper.

Theoph. Let vs come to the ſacramentall rite, and the ſignification of it.

Mat. It is double, or twofold.

1. For the one reſpecteth the Miniſter:
2. The other, him which is partaker of the Supper. The Sacramentall rite of the Supper.

The firſt is this, to take the bread and breake it: Whereby is ſignified, that Chriſt, with ſuffering, was broken for our redemption: which himſelfe declared in theſe words, This is my body, that is broken for you. Then, to giue it being broken, and to deliuer the wine in the cup. By which rites is meant, that God doth offer and giue Chriſt vnto vs, together with all his benefits. The latter rite is, that he which commeth to the Supper, ſhould receiue, eate, and drinke the bread and wine giuen vnto him. Which indeede doe ſignifie, that in the Supper we do truly receiue Chriſt, eate his body, and drinke his blood; by the which wee are nouriſhed into the hope of eternall life, if wee doe not put him from vs through vnbeleefe. What the miniſters muſt doe in miniſtring the Supper. What they muſt doe that come to the Lords Table.

Theoph. What is it, to eat the body of Chriſt?

Mat. To be ſo neerely ioyned with his body, as the meat which we eat is with our owne body.

Theoph. What is it, to drinke the blood of the Lord?

Mat. To bee as truly partakers of his death and paſſi-

on

on, as if we our ſelues had ſuffered the ſame. And this doth our Sauiour Chriſt meane, when he ſaith; Verily, verily, I ſay vnto you, Except you eate the fleſh of the Sonne of man, and drinke his blood, you haue no life in you. Hee that eateth my fleſh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternall life. But this is to be remembred (which we ſpake before, in the Chapter of faith) namely, that, by the merit of Chriſts death (repreſented in the holy Supper, by Wine, that ſignifieth his blood) the Scripture vnderſtandeth all the benefits of Chriſt; but, for the moſt part, maketh mention of that onely, becauſe it hath as it were the firſt and chiefe place.

Theoph. Let vs goe forward. What vnderſtandeſt thou by that ſpirituall food, which thou ſaidſt came by the eating of Chriſts body, and drinking his blood?

Our ſpirituall food in the ſupper.

Mat. Firſt, peace of conſcience: namely, becauſe we are more and more aſſured of the forgiueneſſe of our ſinnes promiſed by Baptiſme. Secondly, the daily growth and increaſe of the new man, begun in vs in our Baptiſme, ſo as we haue power giuen vs to ſerue God better, and to reſiſt the temptations that are wont to call vs away from his obedience: whereupon followeth an effect of this ſpirituall food; namely, that we are confirmed daily in the hope of eternall life. And by theſe things appeareth that which I haue ſaid of the difference of the Sacraments; to wit, that Baptiſme doth teſtifie the beginning of our partaking with Chriſt and his benefits, and the Supper the continuance and increaſe thereof.

Theoph. Now let vs come to the commandement and promiſe of this Sacrament.

Mat. Both be added, preſently after the words of inſtitution: *Take, eate, drinke you all of this, doe this in remembrance of me.* Loe, there is the commandement: then the promiſe; *This is my body, This is my blood.* For the meaning of theſe words is as much, as if Chriſt had ſaid; This bread and this wine doe ſo repreſent vnto you my bodie and blood, that they aſſure you, receiuing the viſible ſignes, to bee indeede partakers of thoſe things that bee ſignified by them; namely, of my body and blood.

Theoph. But the words of Chriſt ſeeme not to haue that meaning;

nothing, but rather that the bread and wine are transubstantiated or turned into his body and bloud.

Mat. The words themselues cannot beare it. For if Christ meant to haue signified that, he would haue said thus, Let this be made my body, or let it bee changed into my body.

Theoph. What then were the meaning of Christs words, if they were to bee expounded according to the letter, as they lye? The exposition of Christs words.

Mat. They should rather signifie, that his body and bloud were changed into bread and wine. For if any saw the pillar of salt, whereinto Lots wife was turned, out of all doubt he would say; This thing, that is, this pillar of salt is Lots wife; that he might declare that she was turned into that pillar; and such as heard those words, would take them in that sense.

Theoph. I perceiue indeed that those words if they were to be expounded literally, doe properly signifie as thou saiest. Howbeit, that sense agreeth not to the words of Christ.

Mat. Thou thinkest righly; and that former agreeth nothing more, namely, whereon transubstantiation is builded: which indeede the very words doe not beare: yea rather out of it foure absurdities doe follow.

Theoph. Rehearse them.

Mat. 1. First, if the bread and wine be turned into the body and bloud of Christ, there shall bee no signes in the holy Supper; and therefore it shall not be a Sacrament: which indeed cannot be without a visible signe. A confutation of the absurdities following vpon popish transubstantiation.

2. Secondly, Christs blood shall be separated from his body: which is most absurd, and impossible to be. Moreouer, the body of Christ should be infinite: and therefore he should not be a very man; neither should he haue truly ascended into heauen. By which opinion, the chiefe points of our faith should be ouerthrowen.

Theoph. Some do obiect that Christs body is now glorified, and at one and the same time may be in diuers places.

Mat. This obiection is vaine. For, when Christ instituted the Supper, his body was not glorified. Adde hereunto that the glorification hath not taken from it the nature of a true body; but hath taken away the infirmity and weak-

on, as if we our ſelues had ſuffered the ſame. And this doth our Sauiour Chriſt meane, when he ſaith; Verily, verily, I ſay vnto you, Except you eate the fleſh of the Sonne of man, and drinke his blood, you haue no life in you. Hee that eateth my fleſh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternall life. But this is to be remembred (which we ſpake before, in the Chapter of faith) namely, that, by the merit of Chriſts death (repreſented in the holy Supper, by Wine, that ſignifieth his blood) the Scripture vnderſtandeth all the benefits of Chriſt; but, for the moſt part, maketh mention of that onely, becauſe it hath as it were the firſt and chiefe place.

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Theoph. Rehearse them.

A confutation of the absurdities following vpon popish transubstantiation.

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neſſe of it; which is very well obſerued of one of the Fathers. For this cauſe Paul ſaith; The heauen muſt hold him, vntill the time of the reſtoring of all things. And the Angels, in another place; So ſhall hee come, as you haue ſeene him goe into heauen.

Act.3.21. Act.1.11.

Theoph. Shew the fourth abſurditie.

Mat. It is this, that the wicked and hypocrits, comming to the Supper, ſhould truly partake of the body and blood of Chriſt: which verily were nothing elſe but to ioine God and Sathan together. Moreouer, contrary vnto that which the Scripture expreſly teacheth, the vnbeleeuers ſhould be ſaued. For Chriſt affirmeth, Whoſoeuer eateth my fleſh, and drinketh my blood, hath euerlaſting life.

* Ioh.6.54. Againſt thoſe who ſay, the reprobate, in the ſupper be partakers of Chriſts body and blood. 1.Cor 11.29.

Theoph. But Chriſt vnderſtandeth thoſe, which eate his fleſh, and drinke his blood, worthily. For the Apoſtle ſaith, He that eateth this bread, and drinketh this cup vnworthily, eateth and drinketh to himſelfe damnation.

Mat. The Apoſtle ſaith not, who ſo eateth the body of Chriſt, and drinketh the blood of Chriſt vnworthily, but he that eateth the bread and drinketh the cup. For Chriſt ſhould offer his body to be prophaned, if he made the vnworthy partakers of it. Moreouer, his gifts be inſeparably ioyned with his perſon: and therefore it is impoſſible, that any ſhould communicate with his body, but the ſame alſo muſt be partakers of all his benefits, and euen of euerlaſting life. For this cauſe Iohn ſaith; He that hath the Son, hath life: Hee that hath not the Sonne of God, hath not life. Thoſe foure abſurdities, reckened vp by vs, doe moſt manifeſtly ouerthrow the opinion of tranſubſtantiation: which is alſo diſproued by experience it ſelfe; foraſmuch as the bread and wine of the Supper, if they be kept long, doe corrupt. Whereupon it is plaine, that their ſubſtance is not changed.

1.Ioh.5.12.

Th. I do indeed perceiue, that the words of Chriſt do not eſtabliſh tranſubſtantiation, or the turning of the ſignes into the things ſignified: both becauſe the words themſelues cannot beare it; & eſpecially in this, that moſt groſſe abſurdities do follow thereupon. But, by what arguments can you proue, that the expoſition, brought by you, doth expres the ſenſe of Chriſts words, and that this was his meaning?

Mat.

Mat. Seeing there must be an exposition of them, it is not to be doubted, but it ought to be true & proper, being such as may be confirmed by the testimonie of the holy Scripture, & whereupon no absurdity followeth. But, that which I haue brought is such: therefore it is true & proper. In a true exposition of Christs words in the Supper, two things required.

Theoph. If you proue these two points, you shall doubtlesse ouercome.

Mat. First, that exposition is confirmed by the testimonie of the holy Scripture. For, PAVL thus expoundeth the words of Christ, instituting the Supper; The cup of blessing, which we blesse, is it not the Communion of the blood of Christ? The bread, which we breake, is it not the Communion of the body of Christ? Which words doe indeede signifie no other thing, but that wee should vnderstand the bread and wine to be most certaine signes of our Communion & fellowship with Christs body and blood. And that doth altogether agree with my expositiō. Moreouer, these words, THIS IS MY BODY, are to haue the like exposition with these, THIS IS MY BLOOD: But LVKE expoundeth them thus; This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you. The same exposition also did PAVL follow, repeating the words of the institution. And this maner of speech can admit no other exposition (without wresting the words) than this, That the wine offered in the cup is a most sure pledge of the couenant, which God hath made with vs by the pretious blood of Christ. The same therefore is to be said of the bread; namely, that it is a most sure pledge of the vnion which wee haue with the body of Christ. 1. Testimony of Scripture confirmeth it. 1. Cor. 10. 16. Luk. 22. 20. 1. Cor. 11. 25.

Theo. Cōcerning the first thing required in a true interpretatiō, thou hast satisfied mee: let vs now come to the other.

Mat. Concerning the other, I affirmed that the exposition which I brought, had no absurditie in it. For it hindereth not; but that wee may truly eate the body of Christ and drinke his blood, to our saluation. Yea, the foure absurdities, which I spake of euen now, be auoided. 2. No absurditie ensueth of it.

For, the signes retaine their owne nature.

The blood of Christ is not separated from his body.

The truth of his humanitie, ascension, and sitting at the right hand of the Father remaineth safe.

Finally, the vnbeleeuers are not partakers of his body and bloud.

Why Christ vsed those words, and no other, in the institution of the Supper.

Theoph. If that were the meaning of Christ, why did he not expresse it in plainer words and lesse doubtfull?

Mat. He could not expresse that promise, in fewer and more significant words. For, if he had said, This is a pledge or signe of my body, there had bin no promise. It had therfore bin necessary for him, to haue vsed long circumstance of words, after this manner; I auouch, that this bread and this wine doe so represent vnto you my body and bloud, that as often as ye receiue these visible signes, yee shall bee truly and indeed partakers of the things, whereof they be signes. But this kinde of speech had not bin of such force and weight, as that is which he vseth; THIS IS MY BLOOD: for it comprehended all those things vnder it, but with a greater Maiestie. And for this cause the holy Ghost vsed a like kinde of speech in all the Sacraments of the old Testament: to wit, in that it giueth the name of the thing signified to the signes themselues; to teach vs that the worthy receiuers be truly partakers of the thing signified.

The confirmation of the former interpretation.

Theoph. Declare that vnto me particularly, in some Sacraments of the old Church.

Gen. 17. 9. 10. 11.

Mat. First, God meaning to assure ABRAHAM and his posterity, that circumcision was vnto them a most certaine signe that they were reckened in his couenant, calleth it his couenant. The same also saith MOSES of the Sacrament of the Passeouer. For he calleth it the Lords Passeouer, to giue them to vnderstand, that it was a most certaine token of the good will of God. Whereof the Israelites had experience when the Angell destroyed the first borne of the Ægyptians, and passed ouer their houses without touching them, whereof the Passeouer was a Sacrament.

Exod. 12. 11.

Theoph. Indeede these kinds of speaking doe come somewhat neere to the words of Christ vsed in the institution of the holy Supper. But I demand; if there be any altogether like vnto them, and that haue the same meaning with that, which thou hast alledged?

Mat. There be. For the Apostle, speaking of the Sacraments which the Fathers vsed in the wildernes, saith; that the rocke, that is, the water, which MOSES had (not with-

1. Cor. 10. 4.

out

out miracle) brought out of stone, was Christ: to teach that it was vnto them a most effectuall Sacrament of the communion and fellowship which they had with Christ. For the same Apostle affirmeth; that the Fathers did eate the same spirituall meate with vs, and dranke the same spirituall drinke. Lo therefore a manner of speech altogether like to that which Christ vsed in the institution of the Supper; and which hath the same interpretation with that which I brought a little before. Yea and that more is, there is vse of this kind of speech, not onely in the Scripture, but also in our common talke. For if a king will forgiue an offender the punishment of his faults, deliuering vnto him his letters patents, confirmed by his handwriting & seale, he will say, Behold thy pardon. And yet he meaneth not, that the letters patents be his pardon, but onely a certaine testimonie of his pardon. And this similitude very excellently agreeth with the Sacraments; which bee, as it were, seales of the word: as the Apostle testifieth, speaking of circumcision For hee calleth it the seale of the righteousnesse of faith. Rom. 4. 11.

Theoph. I doe now see, that thy interpretation doth expresse the true meaning of Christs words. I do also grant, that, by those words, Christ assureth vs, that we are as verily partakers of his body and blood, as we do receiue the bread and wine. But how can that be? vnderstandest thou that his bodie is shut vp or inclosed in the bread, and his blood in the wine? Against the error of consubstantiation.

Mat. At no hand. For the words themselues cannot any way beare it. For, Christ must then haue said, My body is with this bread, and my blood is with this wine.

Secondly, wee should hold a carnall eating; which would leade vs to the three latter absurdities, reckened vp by vs, when wee spake of transubstantiation; namely, that the blood of Christ should be seuered from his body; that his body should be infinite: and, finally, that tho wicked, comming to the Supper, should communicate with the body and blood of Christ, and consequently obtaine euerlasting life. Moreouer, Christ himselfe doth teach the contrary. For vnto his Disciples, iudging the speech which he had of eating his body, to be hard, hee answereth thus;

Ioh. 6. 63. It is the ſpirit that giueth life, the fleſh profiteth nothing. The words that I ſpeake vnto you, are ſpirit and life. By which words, he declareth moſt euidently, that hee ſpeaketh not of any carnall, but of a ſpirituall eating.

Theoph. You haue affirmed before, that Chriſt, in that place did not ſpeake of the eating which is in the Supper, but of that which is ſpirituall by faith.

Of the eating of Chriſts body and drinking his blood.

Mat. As the Scripture doth ſet before vs one Chriſt, ſo it ſheweth one way, how to eate his fleſh and drinke his blood (that is, wherby we may be made one with him; that ſo wee may bee partakers of all his benefits): and this is, ſpiritually by faith. Seeing therefore this ſpirituall eating is abundantly ſufficient to our ſaluation, and is grounded vpon the word of God, it ouerthroweth that carnall eating, which men by the example of the Capernaites haue deuiſed to themſelues: from the which alſo (if it could be) there were no other profite to be looked for, than that which we receiue by ſpirituall eating.

Therefore, albeit Chriſt, in that place, ſpeaketh not of the Sacramentall eating, but of that, which is by receiuing the word in faith: neuertheleſſe, it both may and ought to be referred vnto that, becauſe it is one and the ſame eating. And therefore whatſoeuer is ſaide of the one, muſt neceſſarily agree to the other. And doubtleſſe, ſeeing the queſtion is of the food of our ſoules, which is ſpirituall, and the meat is ſpirituall; it followeth of neceſſitie, that the eating is ſpirituall; euen as we cannot nouriſh our bodies, except earthly food bee viſibly and ſenſibly eaten, for the preſeruation of this life.

Theoph. What doſt thou properly vnderſtand, by ſpirituall eating?

How we that bee in the earth, be partakers of Chriſt his body which is in heauen.

Mat. That Chriſt, although (concerning his humane nature) he goe not out of the heauens, doth yet by the power of the holy Ghoſt communicate vnto vs his body and blood, and that by faith: which is in ſtead of a ſpirituall hand and mouth, by which we receiue him, and apply him vnto vs; as hath beene more at large declared of vs, in the Chapter of faith. And this is the ſpirituall eating of Chriſt by faith, being oppoſite to the carnall eating: which ſome haue dreamed to bee with the bodily mouth; ſo that the

very substance of the body and blood of Christ is eaten without: which is a most absurd fiction. And yet no maruell though some haue fallen into it: for, as the spirituall man, when he heareth that the body of Christ is to be eaten, & his blood to bee drunken, vnderstandeth it (according to his spirituall hunger & thirst) spiritually; and therefore prepareth his heart by faith: so, contrariwise, the carnall man hath no other cham carnall cogitations in all his businesses & therefore prepareth the mouth of his body, to deuoure Christ. But the saying of Austen is notable: Why doest thou make ready thy teeth and belly? Beleeue, and thou hast eaten.

Theoph. But how can it be, that Christ, which is in heauen, should truly communicate his body vnto vs, that bee conuersant vpon the earth?

Mar. That ought not to seeme marellous vnto vs: for if the Sunne, being a creature without life, doe by his beames communicate the effect & power of it vnto vs that liue vpon the earth, by a far stronger reason may Christ, which is the Sun of righteousnesse, by the immeasurable power of the H. Ghost, truly make vs partakers of his body, in the Supper; to whom it is no harder to ioyne together things farre distat asunder, than those that be most nigh. Which indeed appeareth euen by this, that it ioyneth together all the faithfull (albeit they be scattered here and there) into one body, whereof Christ is the head. That is also shadowed in the Supper: for the Apostle saith, We which are many, are one body: for all of vs are partakers of one bread. 1. Cor. 10. 17.

Theoph. But some obiect, that if in the Supper of the Lord we do onely spiritually and by faith communicate with the body of Christ, there is no great profit of it, seeing that is daily fulfilled in vs, by the ministerie of the word receiued by faith. An obiection against spirituall eating.

Mar. It followeth not. For there be diuers helpes ordained of God to the same end; namely, to procure or further our saluation, in his Sonne, through the holy Ghost: euen as a good Physitian procureth the health of the Patient committed to his trust, by sundry meanes. Wherefore although by receiuing the word in faith, Christ be already spiritually eaten of vs, yet neuertheless this is more and

more performed in the Supper, through the which the Lord is working according to his promise, and so furnisheth vs with the power of the holy Ghost, that our hearts be more abundantly inflamed with his loue, and confirmed in the hope of euerlasting life.

Theoph. Seeing then it is certaine, that we are not otherwise partakers of Christ in the Supper, than spiritually, and by faith: it followeth, that all they which come to it without faith, haue no fruit or benefit by it.

Theoph. That indeed is most true. For, by their vnbeleefe they reiect Christ, whom God offered to them in the Supper. Wherefore, they be partakers only of the signes, and that to their condemnation: seeing that (so much as in them is) they prophane and vnhallow that most holy spirituall banquet, prouided of God for his children; whiles they come vnto it not furnished with that most precious garment, namely, faith: whereby we are iustified before God, made the sonnes of God, and be accounted worthy to sit downe at his table. For this cause the Apostle com- 1. Cor. 11. 20.
mandeth that euery one should proue himselfe, and so eate of that bread, and drinke of that cup.

Theoph. What is the way whereby a man ought to proue himselfe?

Mat. Let him try himselfe, and see whether he haue faith: which shall be easie to perceiue by repentance, as is hath beene said of vs in the proper place. Whosoeuer therefore is not any way touched with repentance, is altogether vnworthy to be admitted to the Supper of the Lord.

Theoph. But what thinkest thou of him, that hath some feeling of repentance, though it be very little?

Mat. If it bee so little, that it shew not it selfe by returning to God, and by amendment of life, it ought to bee suspected. For, true repentance, albeit it be weake, doth alwaies discouer it selfe by some outward workes.

In the meane time, it is not to bee doubted, but that as our faith is alwaies very weake, so it standeth with our repentance. And this doubtlesse is so, euen in the most regenerate, although diuersly; for in some it is more, in others it is lesse. Notwithstanding it is so farre off, that this weakenesse should driue vs from the holy Supper, that it

ought

ought rather to ſpurre vs forward to come vnto it, that by it we may bee ſtrengthened in faith and repentance, euen as the ſicke man, the weaker he knoweth himſelfe to bee, ſhould ſo much the more diligently ſeeke for meate, both to receiue nouriſhment thereby, and alſo to repaire his ſtrength. Therefore they onely bee vnworthy to come to the Lords Supper, who delight in their ſins, and go on in them. For, ſeeing they bee dead in ſinne, they neither are worthie, nor haue further vſe of this ſpirituall ſuſtenance.

Theoph. But if ſuch men come to the Supper, what thinke you is to be done?

Mat. If their vnworthineſſe be ſecret and hidden, they ought to be left to the iudgement of God, who will one day take vengeance vpon them: but if it be knowen, they ought (by order of Eccleſiaſtical diſcipline) to be put back from it.

Theoph. What call you Eccleſiaſticall diſcipline?

Mat. The order inſtituted by God in the Church, ſpecially for two ends. The firſt is, that the Miniſterie may be vpheld, that (as PAVL ſaith) all things may be done in the Church decently and in order. Alſo, that vpon appointed daies and at certain times Sermons may bee made, and the Sacraments adminiſtred, and with due reuerence frequented and reſorted vnto, by ſuch as haue ioyned and betaken themſelues to the Chriſtian Church. The other end is, that the conuerſation and doctrine of euery one may bee looked into; that ſuch as haue giuen offence may bee corrected and dealt with, according to the degrees preſcribed by Chriſt: yea, if they be ſtubborne, to bee at length excommunicated, that is, cut off from the body of the Church; leſt God himſelfe be ſlandered, and the flocke (by their euill example) infected. Moreouer, that (if it be poſſible) they may (as PAVL teacheth) by that ſhame, be called to repentance.

Eccleſiaſtical diſcipline.

1. Cor. 14. 40.

Math. 18. 15. 16. 17.

Theoph. Of whom ought that Eccleſiaſticall diſcipline to be exerciſed?

Mat. Of the Paſtors of the Church, to whom are to be adioyned certaine Seniors or Ancients for this end, as neceſſitie ſhall require, choſen of the Church.

THE

THE SVMME OF ALL Christian Religion:

Declared in a threefold method or order.

THEOPHILVS.

THankes be to God, from whom we haue receiued this benefit, that we haue happily in my iudgement handled all the parts of Christian Religion. Now I would that thou shouldest draw the chiefe heads of it into a short sum, before we make an end of this our disputation.

Mas. That abridgement or Breuiary may be done in a triple or threefold method: so as the first may be profitable to the instruction of the godly; the other to their comfort; & the third to consist of both, by making an oppositon or contrariete of true religion, with all other religions.

Theo. Goe to therefore, declare the first.

The first Epitome. *Mas.* It shall declare the order of the whole booke: which indeed may be brought to fiue heads or principall points: the dependencie, coherence, or linking together whereof sheweth, what certaintie and truth is in euery one of them, and so in all Christian Religion, in such sort as it hath beene laid foorth by vs.

Theoph. Rehearse those chiefe points.

Mas. The first intreateth of God.
The second of man.
The third of Christ.
The fourth of faith,
The fift of the Holy Ghost.

Theoph. It shall be so much the more easie to remember them, because ech of them may be applied to eeh finger of the hand. Declare them therefore to me in order, and shew me the coherence & agreement which thou diddest attribute vnto them.

God. *Mas.* First, we must hold this principle, That God (seeing he is perfectly iust, and perfectly mercifull) doth not only shew his mercie, but doth also declare his iustice.

Man. This foundation being laid, it followeth, that man (who

of

of his owne nature is a wretched sinner) cannot be saued frō eternall death, which he hath deserued, except he haue some fit meane, whereby the perfect iustice of God may be satisfied. But there can be found no other meane, besides the merit of Christs death. For by it the wrath of God being appeased, there is a way made for vs vnto his mercy, & therefore vnto eternall life. But Christ shall profite vs nothing, except we be members of his body, and so be partakers of his benefits. And both of these we obtaine by faith which indeed sheweth it selfe by good works: and namely by prier. Finally, the holy Ghost worketh this faith in the harts of the godly, by the preaching of the word, & confirmeth & keepeth it, as wel by that preaching as by the vse of the sacraments, till at length he bring vs to euerlasting life. Christ. Faith. The holy Ghost.

Theoph. This is an excellent Breuiarie: for, in most few words and fit order, it containeth the summe of Christian doctrine, for the instruction of the godly. Now therefore let vs come to the other: which thou saidst was profitable for the comfort of the faithfull. The second Epitome.

Met. That shall be set out, in an order diuers from the former: but it may be also brought into fiue heads.

1. The first is of repentance.
2. The second of faith.
3. The third of Christ.
4. The fourth of God.
5. The fift of eternall life.

And these also be ioyned together betweene themselues by a most close coherence and neere band, to assure the godly of their saluation.

Theoph. Shew me that band, or coherence.

Met. First, whosoeuer doth truely repent (and that is easily perceiued, namely, when we serue God frō the hart) hee hath faith. But whosoeuer hath faith, is partaker of Christ and his benefits. And againe, whosoeuer is partaker of Christ and his benefits, is iustified, and made the child of God. But whosoeuer is iustified and made the childe of God, shall be deliuered from condemnation, & made partaker of eternall life. Whereupon it followeth, that hee, which by good works is assured of his repentance, shall neuer perish, but haue life euerlasting. And those fiue stairs Repentance. Faith. Christ. Eternall life.

or

ur steps may be in stead of a ladder, by the which we may climbe vp euen into heauen, to vnderstand certainly whether our names be written in the booke of life, or not: but the first onely is hard.

Theoph. Why so?

Mar. Because there is no little labour to be bestowed in the denial of flesh, that we may serue God from the heart: but when a man by the grace of God hath profited so far, there is very little labour behinde. From hence it is, that sometimes the Scripture attributeth our saluation vnto works, namely, to note vnto vs this order. As, when hee saith: God will giue to euery one according to his works. They shall come foorth that haue done well, to the resurrection of life. Whereunto also that ought to be referred, which is said in another place; Blessed are they that walke in the Law of the Lord.

Rom. 2.6. Ioh. 5.26. Psal. 119.1.

Theoph. There is one doubt behinde within me, which seemeth to let that the godly cannot be sure of their saluation; namely, because thereunto is required, that they be sure of perseuerance and continuing to the end; without which, Christ affirmeth that none can be saued. Neuertheless, there be many found, which in shew begin happily, yea also haue long continued in the knowledge and confession of the truth; who notwithstanding doe so fall from it, that they neuer returne.

Mar. It is true indeed, that perseuerance is necessarie to saluation: howbeit, the Apostle affirmeth, that he which hath begun the good worke in vs, will perfect the same euen vnto the day of Christ; that is, to the end of the battell. And concerning them that fall away, the words of the Apostle be manifest; They went out from vs, but they were not of vs; for if they had been of vs, they should haue continued with vs. But this is done, that it might appeare, they all were not of vs. Moreouer, they be those of whom Christ speaketh, when hee saith; They which receiued the seede (that is, the doctrine of the truth of the Gospell) in stony ground, are they which heare the word, and straightway receiue it with ioy; but they haue no root in themselues, but are for a time; and when trouble or persecution ariseth for the words sake, they are by and by

Phil. 1.6. 1. Ioh. 2.19. Mat. 13.20. 21.

offended. But they, which receiued the ſeede amongſt thornes, are ſuch as heare the Word; but the cares of this world, and the deceitfulneſſe of riches choake the Word, and it is made vnfruitfull.

Theoph. This therefore is your meaning, that they which ſo fall from the profeſſion of the Goſpell, that they neuer returne againe, did neuer truly beleeue the Goſpell: although for a time, they did in outward ſhew make profeſſion of it.

Mat. You thinke right. For, true faith is ſeated in the heart, and there taketh roote by the effectuall working of the holy Ghoſt: which he beſtoweth not vpon any, but thoſe that be choſen of God, in Ieſus Chriſt, vnto ſaluation. And, by this meanes, he openeth vnto vs the counſell of God (which we otherwiſe know not) concerning ſauing vs. Whoſoeuer therefore, by their true repentance, be aſſured of their faith, ought not to make doubt either of perſeuerance, or of eternall life.

Theoph. You haue touched a doctrine, which to ſome ſeemeth difficult and hard. Neuertheleſſe, I would wee might ſpeake a little of it. For, I account it among thoſe things, which the more deepely they be ſearched into, the more they be obſcured and darkned. Firſt, ſhew me what is the foundation of it. Of the eternall election of God.

Mat. Firſt, it may be gathered out of the whole Chriſtian doctrine; but eſpecially out of the doctrine of iuſtification by faith, and of regeneration; by which we are taught, that our ſaluation is freely beſtowed vpon vs in Ieſus Chriſt, and that it cannot ſpring from our ſelues. Seeing therefore God beſtoweth not ſo great a benefit vpon euery one, it followeth neceſſarily, that they which obtaine it were choſen of God himſelfe, according to the good pleaſure of his will; and therefore that the eternall election of God cannot bee taken away, but that together with it the principall foundations of Chriſtian Religion, ſhal be ouerthrowen, and our ſaluation made voide. By what doctrine it is prooued.

Theoph. Is there not ſome expreſſe teſtimony of it in the Scripture?

Mat. There is: and not onely one, but more; and thoſe moſt plaine. Among the which, the words of PAVL, writing Prooued by teſtimony of Scripture.

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Eph.1.4.9.13.14. to the Ephesians, bee the chiefe; God hath chosen vs in Christ, before the foundations of the world were laid, making knowne vnto vs the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he had purposed in himselfe. And we are sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance.

Theoph. A few words indeed: but such, whereby the Apostle bringeth great light to this doctrine. For it is made the easier by the distinction which he vseth, namely according to the persons of the Trinitie, whiles hee attributeth the beginning or foundation of it to the Father, the matter to the Son, and the manifesting of it to the holy Ghost.

Mat. You iudge rightly: And so indeede is that doctrine to be considered, to our edification & comfort. For they that looke to it as it were lying hid in the counsell of God, reape nothing by it, but trouble of minde, and vexation of conscience. For they doe, as if one, to see the better, should fix his eies vpon the globe of the Sunne: by the beholding of which light, it is not to be doubted, but his eies would waxe dim. Who, if he looked vpon that light in the Sunne beames, might haue vse of it, and see all things offered to his sight, and how & what way to direct his steps. Likewise also this doctrine, when it is considered in Christ in whom we are chosen, and wee seeke for in our selues the testimonie which the holy Ghost yeeldeth vs by our effectuall calling, doth then affoord vs exceeding comfort, and assureth vs of our saluation, otherwise doubtfull and vnknowne vnto vs.

Of the calling of the elect.

Theoph. What meane you by that effectuall calling, whereby you say, that wee are by the holy Ghost assured of our election?

Mat. I called it so, to put a difference betweene the true calling of the faithfull, & the false; which is alwaies weake and vnprofitable. For they which are called by the latter, will not heare the voice of God, or, if they heare it, yet are vnwilling to draw neere vnto him; or, if they draw neere, it is with a double and hypocriticall heart; and not long after, they fall from him. But they that be called with the other, are enlightned by the holy Ghost, so as the word of God entreth into their hearts, they draw neere to God, and

and follow him with obedience of faith. And such kinde of calling as this, is alwaies toyned with election: for it is the iudge and declarer of it.

Theoph. But that effectuall calling seemeth to be nothing else, but the regeneration, which the holy Ghost worketh in vs, whereof we haue spoken before. Of regeneration.

Mat. Thou saiest true. For by it he openeth our eares, to heare the voice of God, that calleth vs: He lighteneth the eies of our minde, to know him in Christ Iesus: Hee disposeth our hearts, to beleeue his doctrine, to embrace it in true faith, confesse it, and follow it: Hee confirmeth our will, to loue and feare him: and so to keepe our selues in the reuerence and worship of his Maiestie.

Theoph. Therefore whosoeuer is assured of his effectuall calling; by the fruite of regeneration, hee ought not to doubt of his election and saluation. Of the assurance of saluation.

Mat. He ought not? Nay, contrariwise, he ought to bee sure of it: which also wee professe in the last article of the Creede, whē we say, I beleeue the life euerlasting. For by it we not onely vnderstand, that we beleeue there is an euerlasting life; but that we are assured, that we our selues shall one day be partakers of it. And that article is set at the end of the Creede, as a necessarie consequence vpon the things going before; but especially of the article concerning the holy Ghost, from whom we haue that assurance. That also doth the Lord confirme vnto vs, both by the ministerie of the word, whereby he assureth the penitent of the forgiuenesse of their sinnes; and also by the Sacraments, which be as seales and pledges of that loue wherewith the Father loueth vs in Christ.

Theoph. Doth not that assurance of our election and saluation, which thou art about to perswade the faithfull of, make them slothfull to good workes?

Mat. How can that bee? seeing it is certaine, that our election & saluation are confirmed by good works: without which, as hath beene said, it can no way stand. For which cause, PETER thus warneth vs; Wherfore, brethren, giue diligence to make your calling and election sure. For, if you do these things, you shall neuer fall. Moreouer, the holy Ghost, which sealeth that assurance in our hearts, cannot The assurance of saluation is confirmed by sanctification begun. 1. Pet. 1. 10.

not dwell in vs, but that also it will doe good works in vs.
1. Iohn 3. 9. For this cause, IOHN saith, Whosoeuer is borne of God sinneth not; because his seed remaineth in him: neither can he sinne, because he is borne of God; that is, he cannot so giue himselfe ouer to sinne, as to continue in it: seeing the holy Ghost hath raised him by true repentance.

Theoph. The second Epitome bringeth no lesse comfort to the minds of the godly, than the first did instruction. For by it, both the conscience is appeased, and the minde comforted in a most certaine hope and assurance of eternall saluation. Now the third is behinde: which thou saidst consisted of both.

The third Epitome. *Mat.* It containeth an Antithesis, or contrarietie, of Christian Religion with all other. For, in the difference betweene them, a faithfull man shall see as it were a new Breuiarie of the Christian doctrine: which indeede shall be both to his comfort and instruction.

Theoph. Let vs therefore consider that difference.

Mat. It standeth chiefly in fiue heads, or principall points.

1. First, that Christian Religion maketh all the chiefe points of the doctrine of it, to agree with the nature of the true God, in the knowledge of whom it strengtheneth and keepeth the godly.

2. The other is, that it setteth and establisheth the glorie of God, in the saluation of men: and so the godly are more and more confirmed in the certainty of their saluation.

3. The third, that it ioyneth good workes with our saluation, by a most nere band (although it be no way grounded vpon them) but yet so, that the faithfull take no matter of boasting out of them.

4. The fourth, that it openeth an entrance for vs vnto God, to craue of him all things necessary.

5. The fift, that it yeeldeth to the godly, matter of patience in aduersitie, and assurance in dangers. These bee the true notes of Christian Religion, which indeede all other religions doe vtterly ouerthrow; because they admit not Christ, or else doe only receiue him in part.

Theoph. We are therefore to weigh these notes; that we may

may shew them to be established of true religion, and ouerthrowne of the rest. Let vs therefore begin at the first: I would haue you declare vnto me, how it keepeth the faithfull in the knowledge of the true God.

Christian religion keepeth the faithfull in the knowledge of the true God.

Mar. It doth specially appeare by this, that it maketh his perfect iustice to agree with his perfect mercy. I say, his perfect iustice, inasmuch as it setteth before our eies, no other way to satisfie it, but the infinite merite of Christ, his Sonne: wherein also his perfect mercy is manifested vnto vs, in that (of his meere grace and fauour) he gaue him to the most shamefull death of the Crosse, to be our redemption: as also, that, for his sake, he giueth vs freely euerlasting life, hauing no respect to our works. For this cause *Paul* calleth Christ the image of the inuisible God. In which words he sheweth, that God cannot be knowne, so as his perfect righteousnes should agree with his most perfect mercy, but in Iesus Christ alone. Whereunto also ought to be applied the words of Christ, vnto *Philip*, *Philip*, he that seeth me, seeth the Father,

Col. 1. 15.

Iohn 14. 9.

Theoph. It remaineth, that ye proone all other Religions to ouerthrow this foundation.

Mar. I will doe that with a very little labour. For this is common to them all, to say, that men, by humane works and inuentions, may satisfie the iudgement of God: and so they doe ouerthrow his perfect righteousnesse, which they thinke they can satisfie with vaine deuises; by the which he is displeased. Moreouer, that men, by their works bee able to deserue eternall life. But, whileste they set vp their owne righteousnesse, thereby to obtaine saluation, either in whole, or in part, they ouerthrow the perfect mercy of God: so as they worship an Idoll instead of the true God. Whereupon is that saying of *Paul*; The heathen be without God in the world. For as *Iohn* saith. Whosoeuer abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. And againe, Christ affirmeth; No man commeth to the Father but by me.

False religious effect. throw the knowledge of the true God.

Ephes. 2. 12. 1. Iohn 2. 23. Iohn 14. 6.

Theoph. Let vs come to the other difference: and let vs see how true Religion establisheth the glory of God, in the saluation of men; and how it assureth them of saluation.

Mar. That is done by the same doctrine: namely, be-

Chriſtian religion aſſureth men of their ſaluation.

cauſe it teacheth, that we haue eternall life of the meere grace of God, without any reſpect to our works. For, by this meanes, all occaſion of glorying is taken from men, and is giuen vnto God alone: which the Apoſtle witneſſeth. For, after that he hath taught, that wee are ſaued by grace, through faith, and that not of our ſelues; it is the gift of God, not of works: he preſently addeth; leſt any ſhould boaſt. And, in another place, he ſaith; Hee hath adopted, or taken vs to be his children, through Ieſus Chriſt according to the good pleaſure of his will. But, whatſoeuer ſerueth to ſet forth the glorie of God, is a true and found foundation of our ſaluation. For, ſeeing it leaneth vpon the euerlaſting and vnchangeable good pleaſure of God in Chriſt, it is ſo ſure to thoſe, that by true faith bee made his members, that it can neuer be ouerthrowne; euen as Chriſt himſelfe witneſſeth, in theſe words; My ſheepe heare my voice, and I know them, and they follow mee, and I giue vnto them eternall life; neither ſhall they perish for euer, neither ſhall any take them out of my hand. My Father which gaue them to mee, is greater then all: neither can any take them out of my Fathers hands. And for this cauſe hee ſaith in another place; He that beleeueth in him that ſent mee, hath euerlaſting life, and ſhall not come into condemnation; but hath paſſed from death to life. Which things being ſo, the faithfull may reioyce, with *Paul*, in theſe words; I am perſwaded, that neither life nor death, neither Angels nor Principalities, nor things preſent, nor things to come, neither height, nor depth, nor any other creature can bee able to ſeparate me from the loue of God, which is in Chriſt Ieſus our Lord.

Epheſ. 2. 9.

Epheſ. 1. 5.

Iohn 10. 27.

Iohn 5. 24.

Rom. 8. 36.

Theoph. It is now thy part to ſhew, that this fundamentall point is ouerthrowne of other Religions.

False Religions ouerthrow the glory of God.

Mat. And this alſo ſhall be done moſt eaſily. For they ouerthrow the glory of God, and ſet vp the glory of man, in that they giue vnto men the glory of their owne ſaluation. Yea, rather, their owne ſaluation is alſo by this meanes ouerthrowne: ſeeing that it leaneth vpon ſo weak a foundation, as their owne good works and merits. Whereof their owne conſcience is a witneſſe. For, although they deceiue themſelues

themſelues with counterfeiting, it is continually in doubt, and troubled with diſtruſt; but eſpecially when they perceiue death to draw neere vnto them. For then they are ſo diſquieted, that they cannot tell whither to turne them.

Theoph. Yea, but the faithfull themſelues be ſometimes appalled and beaten downe with the horror of death, and of Gods iudgement, no leſſe then are the wicked.

Mat. I deny not, but that (in ſome ſort) they be oftentimes beaten downe with it; namely, when they ſet before their eies the infinit number of their ſins, and the grieuouſnes of them, together with the depth of Gods moſt perfect iuſtice: neuertheles, when they caſt their eies vpon Chriſt crucified for them, they bee preſently deliuered from that feare, in the which the wicked be indeed ſwallowed vp; ſo that they are not at all holpen by the merits of Chriſt. The godly therefore, in that combat may be compared with a man vpon the top of a tower, whoſe foundation and wals are moſt ſtrong. For if he looke downeward, he is ſtricken with ſome ſudden feare: from the which he is preſently deliuered, when he perceiueth the ſtrength of the building. But the wicked are like vnto one on the top of a tower; but ſuch a one, as threatneth falling, yea rather is ſhaken with the winds, which indeed preſently falleth.

Theoph. Thou haſt alſo ſufficiently ſatiſfied mé concerning this difference. Let vs come to the third.

Mat. It ſtandeth herein; That good Works bee ioyned with our ſaluation by a moſt neere bond; although it doe no way hang vpon them: as it hath been declared of vs before in the Chapter of Works. For, it cannot by any other meanes be, that we ſhould be partakers of Chriſt to the obtaining of ſaluation, but by the power of the holy Ghoſt dwelling in vs: by the which we are not only made fit to doe well; but alſo kept in the feare of God, ſo as we runne not headlong into ſins. Notwithſtanding, although the godly do good works, yet can they haue no cauſe from them to boaſt. For it is God that worketh in vs, both to will and to performe, according to his good pleaſure. Wherfore they altogether be referred to the glory of God, as alſo our ſaluation it ſelfe is; whereof they be moſt certaine markes.

True religion containeth the doctrine and practiſe of good works.

Phil 2.13.

Theo. Now proue, that good works bee destroied, by false Religions. For they brag, that these are established by them; and doe say that we destroy them.

False religions be against those that be indeed good works.

Mat. I deny not, but that false Religions doe establish superstitious works; which indeed be reiected of vs; but, good works they destroy. For, they so busie their followers and schollers, in the obseruation of mens precepts, that they set light by, and despise Gods commandements: as experience doth aboundantly witnesse. Whereof this seemeth to be the cause eamely; namely, that the wicked, to performe their works, doe trust to their owne free will, that is, to their naturall strength (which, in very deede, is none at all); and so they goe away from Christ: who nethertheless saith; As the branch cannot beare fruite of it selfe, that is, except it abide in the Vine: so neither can ye, except ye abide in me. For, without me ye can do nothing.

Theoph. Declare the fourth difference.

True religion doth purely call vpon the true God, through the onely mediator: but the false do farre otherwise.

Mat. It may be taken from those things, which were said before of vs in the Chapter of Prayer; namely, that Christ, being made ours by faith, doth continually make intercession for vs with his Father: whereupon it is, that he is mercifull vnto vs, and heareth our praiers. The wicked, contrariwise, while they come to God in their owne name, or any other name beside Christs, doe effect nothing by their prayers; both becaus they bee vnworthy to bee heard, and becaus their intercessors are not sufficient, or meet for that office: for they haue not wherewith to appease the wrath of God, most iustly kindled against him that prayeth. Therefore the vngodly can neuer obtaine any thing at the hands of God; vnlesse it bee in his anger: and that doubtlesse falleth out to their condemnation.

Theoph. Declare the last difference: and withall shew, how Christian Religion ministreth to the godly, matter of patience in aduersitie; and, touching things to come, maketh them securely assured, and without scare.

Mat. That is done, by the doctrine of Gods prouidence: wherewith, when the godly vnderstand that all things be gouerned, although they seeme to be compassed about on euery side with all aduersities, yet doe they from thence

thence take matter of comfort, because they know they are beloued of God; and consequently that aduersities be not sent but to their saluation: as it was at large declared by vs, in the Chapter of Faith.

For this cause, *Dauid* did beare the railings and euill speeches of *Shemei* most patiently; and commanded the souldiers to forbeare to kill him: for saith he; He curseth, because God hath commanded him to curse *Dauid*. In another place also, being most grieuously oppressed of his enemies, he saith thus; I was dumbe, neither opened I my mouth: for thou, O Lord, didst this. *Iob* also, hauing lost his goods (which were partly destroyed by thunder, and partly taken away by the *Caldeans*) tooke comfort of this, that the Lord had giuen, and the Lord had taken away. By the same reason also, wee are securely assured concerning things to come, for the Apostle saith; If God be with vs, who can be against vs? He that spared not his owne Son, but gaue him for vs all, how shall he not with him also freely giue vs all things? As if hee had said; Seeing God is our most mercifull Father, and also omnipotent, we haue good cause to hope he will deliuer vs from all dangers, so farre foorth as he knoweth it behouefull to his glory and our saluation, and will also giue helpe in our necessities. This is confirmed by the Prophet in these words; Behold, the eies of the Lord are vpon such as feare him, which trust in his mercy, to deliuer their soules from death, and to quicken them in the time of famine.

2. Sam. 16. 10.
Psalm. 39. 10.
Iob 1. 21.
Rom. 8. 30.
Psalm. 33. 18

The same Propher also in another place warneth vs, saying; Cast thy waies vpon the Lord, and trust in him, and he will bring it to passe. But, other Religions take from men all matter of patience and confidence, whilest they teach, that the wisdome or foolishnesse of men are the causes of all things that befall vs; or doe imagine a certaine bare permission or sufferance of God, separated from his will; or else doe admit fortune.

Psalm. 37. 5.
False religions driues men to impatience and desperation.

All which things do ouerthrow the prouidence of God, being the ground-worke of comfort to those that be assured of their saluation. It cannot therefore otherwise be, but that the vnbeleeuers are stricken with impatience, so oft as troubles assaile them. For, it falleth out to them as to

dogs which bite the ſtone, letting goe him that threw it. But, concerning things to come, they are alwaies euen ſicke with diſtruſt; being therewith, no doubt, continually diſquieted, ſo as they neuer be at reſt.

Theop. You haue ſufficiently ſatisfied me with this oppoſition betweene true Religion, and all other falſe religions. But, before we end this ſpeech, I would haue a compariſon made betweene the followers of them both.

Mat. It may bee eaſily gathered of the former: yea rather, in moſt of the chiefe points, wee ſhould haue ioined them both together. Neuertheleſſe, ſeeing it ſo ſeemeth good vnto thee, I will handle it by it ſelfe, to the end it may appeare, that the godly, that follow the true religion, are in far better eſtate, then the vngodly, fooliſhly giuen ouer to moſt fond ſuperſtitions: and that not onely in the life to come, but alſo in this preſent life, although you ſhould recken vp all the troubles, which we are enforced to ſuffer, for the profeſſion of the Goſpell.

What is the happineſſe of the godly euen in this life.

Theoph. But how agreeth that with the ſaying of *Paul*? *If in this life only we beleeue in Chriſt, we are of all men moſt miſerable.*

Mat. Thoſe words of *Paul* are not contrarie to that which we haue ſaid of the happineſſe of the godly, euen in this life. For, I ſpeake not of a happineſſe that ſtandeth in pleaſure, riches, or in any earthly commodities; (for, in theſe, for the moſt part, the wicked goe far beyond them) but rather in ſpirituall graces, which God giueth vnto vs: namely, when we be aſſured of his loue and good will; and, that more is, of our ſaluation by Chriſt. I therefore thinke with *Paul*, That, of all men we are moſt miſerable, if there were not hope of a better life: eſpecially, conſidering the afflictions which we are conſtrained to ſuffer for the profeſſion of the Goſpell; from the which, in the meane time, the wicked be free. But, on the other ſide, we of all men are moſt happy, when we haue before vs the aſſurance of the loue and good will of God, and the hope of our ſaluation. For, what matter is it if the wicked excell vs in riches, honour, and other commodities of this life? ſeeing they be things vaine and fleeting: which alſo commonly bring with them more diſprofit, then profit. But we, contrariwiſe,

trariwise, haue spirituall riches, that can neuer bee taken from vs: which also bring with them sound and true ioy, and that euerlasting. Hence it is, that *Paul* affirmeth, Godlinesse is profitable to all things; as that which hath the promises of this present life, and of that which is to come. By which words he sheweth, that the fatherly loue of God towards his children, is manifested both in this life and in the life to come. 1. Tim. 4. 8.

Theoph. Shew me therefore, wherein that happinesse of the godly in this life standeth.

Mat. I say that it leaneth vpon foure foundations especially.

Theoph. Declare the first.

Mat. That the faithfull, being iustified by faith, haue peace with God, through Christ Iesus; through whome (saith the Apostle) wee haue, by faith, an entrance to that grace wherein we stand, and doe glory in hope of the glory of God. Whereby it commeth to passe, that death it selfe is not fearefull to vs; Whereas contrariwise, it striketh horrors into the wicked, by reason of the torment of conscience, wherewith they be continually vexed. Rom. 5. 1. Wherein the happinesse of the godly in this life standeth, and the vnhappinesse of the wicked

Theoph. Goe to the second.

Mat. That the faithfull, by Christ, being set free from the seruice of sinne, do ouercome their affections & lusts; whereunto the wicked be bondslaues. From hence is it, that whereas the godly leade an vnreproueable and quiet life; the wicked contrariwise are tossed with sundry perturbations of the minde, because they cannot satisfie their lusts: and often times they are vexed and tormented both in seeking to compasse them, and with pouerty and diseases, afterwards: sometimes also they become infamous, and are punished of the magistrate.

Theoph. Declare the two last points.

Mat. The third is this, that the godly haue alwaies an entrance to the mercy of God through Christ; and that which more is, doe by praiers obtaine of him whatsoeuer is necessary: but the wicked are neuer heard. Finally, the godly, being assured of the good will and fauour of God through Christ, doe wholly commit themselues to his prouidence; and, by the power of the holy Ghost dwelling in them

them, doe patiently beare, all aduersities; yea rather doe meekely and thankfully receiue them, as at the hand of a most kinde father. The wicked contrariwise, remaine ouerwhelmed with the burthen of their afflictions: because they can neuer bee assured of the loue of God (of whose prouidence they be altogether ignorant); and therefore be destitute of the spirit of comfort, and run on either into blockish senselesnes, or else euen into desperation. Which things being so, it is not to be doubted, but that the state of the faithfull, euen in this life, is farre more happie then the state of the wicked. For this cause *Dauid* (who had more then once tried all those things which haue beene said of the godly) speaking vnto God, saith after this manner; Behold O God, our shield, and looke vpon the face of thine anointed. For one day in thy courts, is better then a thousand elsewhere: I had rather be a doore-keper in the house of my God, then to dwell in the Tabernacles of wickednesse. Psal. 84. 9.

The reason whereof hee presently rendreth, in these words; *Because the Lord God is the Sunne and shield: he giueth grace and glorie: hee keepeth backe no good thing from them that walke vprightly. O Lord God of hosts, blessed is the man, that trusteth in thee.*

Theoph. Now it remaineth, that we consider of the difference that shalbe betweene the faithfull and vnfaithfull, after this life.

The difference betweene the beleeuers and vnbeeuers, after this life.

Mat. It shall bee very great, insomuch that it shall farre passe that which we spake of euen now, concerning this life. For, so long as we liue vpon this earth, our happinesse lieth hidden vnder the shame of the Crosse; and the wicked on the other side, in this life, haue for the most part, all things according to their desire: for they are rich, and be in honour and fauour. But their case shall be farre otherwise, when they come to the iudgment seat of the highest Iudge. For then, all the reproach of the godly shall be turned into euerlasting glorie: and, on the other side, the glorie of the wicked shall bee turned into euerlasting shame.

Theo. Shew the cause of this.

Mat. You might haue gathered it from our former discourse:

course: notwithstanding for memories sake, I will in few words repeate it, in this place; which is, That, being clothed by faith with the most perfect righteousnes of Christ, we shall find the tribunall seate of God full of mercie and grace; so as we shall be receiued into eternall glorie, together with Christ our head, the Angels, and all Saints: that so as well of vs as of them, God may be praised, and we liue most happily for euer.

On the other side, the wicked being voide of righteousnesse, yea rather stained with innumerable sinnes, shall finde the iudgment seate of God, seuere: insomuch, as they shall be ouerwhelmed with the horrible wrath of his iust iudgment, and shall at length be cast into the lake of eternall fire: where shall bee weeping and gnashing of teeth. Out of these things therefore you may gather, that there is no *Religion* woorthie of this honorable name, besides that which is grounded vpon Christ: for as much as all superstitions which teach men not to come to God, but to goe away from him, do not reconcile them to him, but more and more prouoke him to wrath; and not onely do not bring them to saluation, but doe misleade them into euerlasting destruction. The conclusion of the former discourse.

Theoph. Hitherto enough hath beene said of the *Antithesis*, or contrariety, betweene religion and superstitions, and the followers of both. I doe now see plainely, that the Christian Religion is the onely true Religion, and that the followers of it are onely happie and blessed, whether wee looke to this life, or that which is to come. For all other men are on euery side most miserable; yea they are more vnhappie then the brute beasts, which, while they liue, be free from all cares, and after death bee deliuered from all labour and paine.

Mat. That is most true. But as the Prophet saith; A fooliish man knoweth not this: and an vnwise man vnderstandeth not this. Psal. 92. 6.

Theoph. I am now fully satisfied, with this you holy instruction; wherein you haue run through all the chiefe points of Christian Religion. And when I haue leasure, I will commit them to writing in order, as they were deliuered by you: that so both my selfe may bee edified, and comfor-

comforted with the reading of them, and that also I may communicate them with my brethren. In the meane time I yeeld you most hearty thanks, for the paines which for my sake you haue taken in this behalfe.

Mat. Nay rather let vs giue thanks to God our heauenly Father, who (of his bounty) hath bestowed on vs this knowledge of his truth, and hath giuen vs also ability to declare it. Let vs now intreate him, that as this trueth is grounded onely in Iesus Christ his Sonne: so by the power of the holy Ghost it may bee grafted in our mindes, that we may sincerely beleeue it with the heart, constantly confesse it with the mouth, and shew foorth the effects of it, in outward workes, euen to our last breath. Which that it may bee, I beseech God to grant vs also, that we may ioyne our selues to the militant Church, and by the ministerie thereof, bee confirmed in the loue and feare of God: that so wee may be at length receiued into the triumphant Church, together with our head and Lord Iesus Christ.

The summe of the duty of Christians.

Theoph. I doe therefore intreate thee (most mightie God, and heauenly Father) to vouchsafe vs these graces, and to cause that the knowledge of thy trueth may bee spread abroad thorowout all the world; that all may acknowledge thee the onely true God, and Iesus Christ thy Sonne the onely Sauiour and mediator of mankind. And to thee alone bee praise and glory, both now and for euer.

Mat. Amen.

FINIS.

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